Plate 1.

D. FRANCISCO
DE QUEVEDO.

R. Hancock f

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D. FRANCISCO
DE QUEVEDO.

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LETTERS

FROM AN

ENGLISH TRAVELLER

IN

SPAIN, IN 1778.

ON THE

ORIGIN and PROGRESS

OF

POETRY

IN THAT KINGDOM;

With occaſional Reflections on MANNERS and CUSTOMS;
And ILLUSTRATIONS of the Romance of DON QUIXOTE.

ADORNED WITH

Portraits of the moſt eminent Poets.

Sed idem
Pacis eras, mediuſque belli. HOR.

LONDON;
Printed for R. BALDWIN, PATER NOSTER ROW;
And ſold by PEARSON AND ROLLASON, BIRMINGHAM.
M. DCC LXXXI.

160
12

ERRATA.

Page 25, line 3, for *Gemblacenſis*, read *Gemblacenſis*.
52, line 3, for *Don Don*, read *Don*.
57, laſt line of note for *Ovihuela*, read *Orihuela*.
87, laſt line, for *Bracenſes* read *Bracharenſes*.
125, verſes, line 4, for *veres* read *veces*.
131, line 4th, of verſes, for *ninguno duo*, read *ninguno*.
134, line 14, for *ſacyr*, read *ſatire*.
159, line 16, for *Cetinia*, read *Cetina*.
168, laſt line for *winqueſort* read *wiqueſort*.
270, line 14, for *Elvina*, read *Elvira*.
288, line 1ſt, for *not only*, read *he not only*.

Directions for the Plates.

Plate 1ſt, Don Franciſco de Quevedo, to face the title.
and, Garcilaſo de la Vega, to face page 159.
3d, Don Alonſo de Ercilla, to face 222.
4th, Lope de Vega, to face 249.

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PREFACE.

So many Engliſh travellers have of late publiſhed their remarks in their reſpective tours through Spain, that it is not without the utmoſt deference that the preſent Letters are offered to the public; as not only the moſt remarkable objects in that kingdom have been fully deſcribed, but we have moreover had catalogues of greek and latin books in libraries, liſts of pictures, and circumſtantial accounts of buildings, both Roman, Gothic and Saracenic, annexed to the various incidents of travelling.—Another writer has had recourſe to the very rocks and mountains, has dug into the bowels of the earth, and viſited the mines, deſcribing the ſubterraneous kingdoms of nature, as well as the various trees, and plants that cover the ſurface of that extenſive country. What then remains to the preſent writer? or how can he flatter himſelf with preſenting any new matter worthy the attention of his readers, that will ſtand the teſt, before the piercing eye of criticiſm? yet methinks whatever may have been the cauſe, whether from bad roads, wretched inns, or extravagant price of proviſions, in the courſe of theſe different peregrinations; the mountain of Parnaſſus has not been viſited by the curious traveller, and the ſpaniſh muſe has tun-

ed her lyre without being diſturbed by the unhallowed ſtep of the rambling ſtranger.—Should this be the caſe, and that the author ſhould have preferred the Caſtalian ſpring to the tempting juice of the La Mancha grape, he ſtill claims indulgence for the many imperfections of the following ſketch, while he truly dreads the charge of intoxication from theſe ſhallow draughts! * at the ſame time he acknowleges to have taken rather a curſory view of Don Quixote's library, and ſome poems are not mentioned ſuch as the *Auſtriada* of John Ruſo, *The Tears of Angelica*, *The Fortune of Love* of Antonio Lofraſco of Sardinia, with ſome others praiſed by Cervantes. However tranſient, the merit of theſe may have been, it is not ſo with an ingenious and burleſque poem intitled the *Moſchea* by Joſeph de Villavicioſa, which ſhould not be forgotten, though not particularly mentioned in this work: the poet has deſcribed with infinite humour and pleaſantry the inconveniences ariſing from that troubleſome inſect the moſchetto: a new edition of it was lately publiſhed at Madrid and dedicated to our ambaſſador then at that court, Lord Grantham, evidently

* See Pope's Eſſay on Criticiſm.

manifeſting

manifeſting in the perſon of that accompliſhed nobleman, a ſenſibility of the impartial and refined Judgment of the Britiſh nation, of which the ſpaniſh muſe ſeemed deſirous to court the particular favour and applauſe.

It has been ſaid by a great and learned french writer " that the Spaniards have but one book, and that one, ſhews the ridicule of all the others." How far ſuch a general reflection appears ſtrained and tinctured with national prejudice, I ſhall leave to others to conſider : --- wiſhing to reverſe ſo ſevere a ſentence, I now ſtand before the court of Apollo, and petition for a hearing. Can we avoid doing that juſtice to the ſurpriſing genius of Lope de Vega, the contemporary, and in a manner rival, of our immortal Shakeſpeare; or can we refuſe encomiums to the learned and unfortunate Quevedo? to whom we may fairly apply the lines of Pope in favour of one of our own poets.

To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,
And ev'ry author's merit but his own.

To thoſe who may be pleaſed with poetical numbers, a few ſpecimens are added of the different kinds of Spaniſh verſification. With reſpect to the judgement paſſed on the ſeveral poets,

poets, I have followed the opinions of their own countrymen, and I further acknowledge my particular obligations for this purpoſe, to two Spaniſh academicians, Don Lewis Joſeph Velazquez, Knt. of the order of St. James, in his Eſſay on Spaniſh poetry; and to the new Spaniſh Parnaſſus, of Don John Joſeph Lopez de Sedano, Knt of the order of Carlos Tercero; as well as to the poſthumous Memoirs intended for the hiſtory of poetry and Spaniſh poets, by the late father Sarmiento, a learned Benedictine, from whoſe valuable writings I have ſelected much information: ſtill the field is ſo ample that a great deal remains unexplored: I have in a manner only traced the ſkeleton of a gigantic figure, whoſe proportions, like the Farneſian hercules, are more eaſily admired, than deſcribed. If therefore from want of abilities equal to the ſubject, I am deficient; I ſhall think myſelf amply rewarded, if on the whole, it may not be thought, I have already ſaid too much, and that I do not fall under the imputation mentioned by Swift of ſome writers, when he ſays, "The moſt accompliſhed way of uſing books at preſent is, to ſerve them as ſome do lords, learn their titles, and then brag of their acquaintance."

LETTERS
ON THE
ORIGIN
OF
SPANISH POETRY.

LETTER I.

Voyage to Barcelona.—College of Trobadours.—Caſtilian language deſcribed.

DEAR SIR,

BARCELONA, 2d MAY, 1778.

WHEN I took my leave of you at Genoa, and embarked in an Engliſh veſſel for Barcelona, I left you reading Petrarch. You may recollect I informed you how much that illuſtrious poet had contributed to poliſh and improve the Poetry of Spain, where he had numerous admirers, as well as imita-

tors, who introduced his metre into their language, though not without oppoſition at firſt, from national prejudice.

You acquainted me that you had already begun to read Don Quixote in its original language, and the celebrated Spaniſh tranſlation of the Aminta of Taſſo, by Jauregui, found in Don Quixote's library, and ſo highly praiſed by Cervantes. You requeſted my opinion concerning the Poetry of Spain, with ſome information relating to their Poets, the time when they flouriſhed, and where their works were printed. Senſible how unequal I am to the taſk, I promiſed however to give you in the courſe of my tour, a ſlight ſketch of the Origin and Progreſs of national Poetry

in

in that kingdom, to trace its viciſſitudes through the mazes of hiſtory and conqueſt, after the irruption of the northern hive, and ſucceeding invaſion of the Saracens; finally, its improvement from the Trobadours, as well as flouriſhing ſtate under the kings of Caſtile: particularly after they had driven out the Moors and diſcovered a new world, furniſhing additional ſcenes to the fancy of the poet, and unexplored regions to the elegant pen of the hiſtorian.

I arrived at this famous city after a pleaſant paſſage of ſeven days. Our veſſel was filled with a motley collection of paſſengers, conſiſting of Spaniſh tumblers returning to Valencia, Italian actreſſes and fidlers, recruit-

ing ſerjeants, pilgrims, and friars. As the weather was fine, we were continually entertained upon deck with the ſhrill fife of the ſoldier, the jarring ſound of a diſſonant guitarre, the din of the caſtanets, with the *fandango* dance, and the love ſongs of the actreſſes; all which were occaſionally interrupted by the grave diſcourſe of a venerable friar, who had lived many years at Rome, and was now returning home wrapt up in monaſtic forms and regulations.—We had ſome blowing weather in croſſing the gulph of Lyons, that gave a pauſe to our mirth; but the ſea became ſmooth like glaſs, as we drew near to Barcelona, when the pleaſing ſight of the coaſt, with the verdant hills in the blooming May,

enraptured

enraptured the eye, while the fanning breezes wafted us forward, and our chearful companions made this little voyage the moſt pleaſant I had ever performed; thus we entered the harbour in triumph, amidſt the exultations of our jolly bacchanalians, who made the hills echo with their vociferation.

So much for muſic. Let me now return to the poets, for I am already on claſſic ground, and the ſeat of the muſes. It was in this city that a college was firſt founded for the Trobadours, who were ſettled here towards the end of the fourteenth century, by John the 1ſt king of Aragon, who ſent a ſolemn embaſſy to France for the purpoſe, deſiring aſſiſtance

from the ſociety of Trobadours at Thouloufe, in order to introduce the *Gaya Sciencia* into Spain, a requeſt which was immediately granted; and two principal perſons were ſent to Barcelona, where they formed an eſtabliſhment: but before I take up the Poets, I muſt ſay a few words concerning the language, as the groundwork on which this ſuperſtructure was to be raiſed.

The common language of Spain is called *Caſtilian*, or *Romance*. This is what is printed in books, and ſpoken at court, and in the univerſities. The city of Toledo was conſidered the ſtandard, when the reſidence of the monarchs; but now Madrid undoubtedly bears the palm. This

is

is the language that prevails in the two Caſtiles, Leon, Aragon, Eſtremadura, Andaluſia, Navarre, Rioja and the mountains of Burgos; in all which places it is common, with more or leſs purity, attended with an accent called *Tonillo*, but without any variety of dialect. It is not ſo in Aſturias, Gallicia, Valencia and Catalonia, where they have a provincial dialect, inſomuch that the Caſtilian language is not univerſal, though generally well underſtood, and written in all parts, except in the mountains of Navarre and Biſcay, where it is neither ſpoken, written, nor underſtood by the common people, who have a different language of their own, unconnected with the Caſtilian; but this is not

the caſe in Catalonia, Valencia, and Galicia, the dialects of which are corruptions of the latin as well as the Caſtilian; of courſe the affinity of the latter has been cloſer, and its progreſs more extenſive.

From ſuch a diverſity of dialects it is natural to ſuppoſe that no modern language abounds more than the Spaniſh with foreign expreſſions, owing to the variety of nations that have viſited that kingdom, conquered it, or become ſubject to its dominion; which makes it difficult to trace the origin of its words, and has ſwelled the dictionary of the Spaniſh academy to ſix volumes in folio, which is yet thought ſo deficient, that the firſt volume has been reprinted with conſiderable

ſiderable additions, for whoever attempts an etymological work of this nature, muſt, excluſive of modern languages, poſſeſs a rich fund of oriental literature, added to a perfect knowledge of latin and greek, a judgment of which may be formed from the ſpecimen exhibited by the learned Cobarruvias (*a*). If then we ſuppoſe the Spaniſh language to be divided into 100 parts, ſixty muſt be allotted to latin, ten to greek, ten to the goths and northern nations, ten hebrew and arabic, and ten german, italian, and french, with the new words imported from the Eaſt and Weſt-Indies.

(*a*) Teſoro de la lengua Caſtellana o Eſpanola, por Don Sebaſtian de Cobarruvias Orozco. Madrid, 1611.

In the year 1300 there were five national languages ſpoken in Spain, viz, the Caſtilian, Lemoſin, Portugueſe, Galician, and Biſcayan, in their reſpective provinces; while the following dead languages were equally common, viz, the hebrew amongſt the Jews, the arabic amongſt the Mahometans, and the latin and greek amongſt the Chriſtians. Aldrete has fairly proved in his book on the "Origin of the Caſtilian language," that it never exiſted as a diſtinct language prior to the invaſion of the goths, and that it owed its origin to a corruption from the latin, though the exact time could not be fixed. Several parchment inſcriptions and poems having been diſcovered and dug up in Granada in the ſixteenth century, weakly attributed to St. Cecilius

a diſ-

a diſciple of St. James, and ſuppoſed to be coeval with the days of the apoſtles; yet written in the Spaniſh language; theſe were alleged with an intemperate zeal againſt Aldrete, who, dreading the iron hand of ſuperſtition, and not daring to contradict the blind notions of his countrymen, unwilling at the ſame time to give up his opinion, he fell upon this ſingular device, "that theſe writings were delivered in a prophetic ſtrain," and thus avoided the conteſt. Theſe monuments of groſs and bigoted credulity were carefully ſent to Rome to be examined, where they have ſince been finally condemned, and the buſineſs is now at an end (a). We need

(a) Papebrochius, in his Life of Ferdinand the ſaint, for the 30th of May, has given a full account of theſe Granada poems; even the reading of them

not

not then be ſurpriſed at their ignorance in other matters relating to the antiquities and hiſtory of their country. Father Sarmiento, a learned benedictine, complains, that there are ſeveral hebrew and arabic books, relating to Spain, with which his own countrymen are totally unacquainted; adding that *Albupharage* was tranſlated by an Engliſhman, *Elmacin* by a Dutchman, and the *Geographia Nubienſis* by a Maronite, being all arabic compoſitions, which, without abſolutely belonging to Spaniſh hiſtory, are replete with a variety of matter that greatly ſerves to illuſtrate its hiſtory and geography. But let

was prohibited in 1641, and they were finally condemned in 1680. "Memorias para la hiſtoria de la Poeſia y Poetas Eſpanoles. Por El Rmo. P. M. Martin Sarmiento. Madrid, 1775."

me

me not involve you in ſuch a chaos. I have already exerciſed your patience and let me rather entertain you with this agreeable climate, ſo particularly inviting at this ſeaſon of the year.

I have made an excurſion to the famous mountain of Montſerrat, the wonder of naturaliſts, which our engliſh travellers in Spain have ſufficiently deſcribed. I ſpeak of it only in a poetical ſtyle, as it has been celebrated in heroic verſe by Chriſtopher de Virues of Valencia, whoſe poem of *Monſerrate* I ſend you herewith, which makes it unneceſſary for me to add any more on the ſubject. You may remember this poem was alſo in Don Quixote's library, and

preſerved

preſerved from the flames. Should this find you reading that incomparable romance, obſerve that I have juſt been on the ſpot near the walls of this city, where the Bachelor Sanſon Carraſco, alias the intrepid *Caballero de la Blanca Luna*, overthrew in ſingle combat the unfortunate hero of *La Mancha*, and gave the finiſhing ſtroke to his extravagant adventures.

Adieu.

LETTER II.

Latin poets in Spain after the conqueſt of the Romans, and under the Goths.

BARCELONA, 12th MAY, 1778.

AS you propoſed to ſet out immediately for England, and to paſs with the utmoſt expedition through France, I hope I ſhall ſoon hear of your ſafe arrival, as it will be ſome time before I can join you. Whatever may be the novelties and pleaſure ariſing from travel, the mind naturally preponderates towards home, and I ſeldom paſs a day without caſting a wiſtful eye towards England, and enjoying, in private,

the

the pleaſing expectation of returning to my own country, and once more with rapture, to hail fair Britannia!

I find, ſince I came here, that I had a narrow eſcape, and that if I had been longer at ſea, and obliged by any accident, to put into Marſeilles, our ſhip would have been ſeized and ourſelves become the dupes of a perfidious and inveterate enemy! but thank God we have had the good fortune to avoid their deceitful wiles.

Having mentioned to you the defeat of the hero of *La Mancha*, you will perhaps expect from this place a ſcene on the gallies, ſimilar to the one deſcribed in ſo lively a manner in Don Quixote, but thoſe days

are

are paſt at Barcelona; the harbour has long ſince been choaked up with ſand; the plans offered to remedy this defect have been rejected, and though the city and port have lately been beautified, this place is only frequented by ſmall veſſels, and the arſenal which ſerved for thoſe gallies, formerly the terror of the Moors, is now converted into a foundery of cannon, where I have ſeen them buſy at work. The corſairs are well apprized of this alteration, for the day I entered Barcelona, I ſaw two of their cruiſers ſtand cloſe in to the mouth of the harbour, with an exulting indifference.

I have ſpent my time very agreeably in this place, and have been of ſe-

veral chearful parties in the neighbourhood. I have laid in a proviſion of good *Matara* wine, which is a red wine little inferior to *Port*, and conſiderably cheaper, and have had the pleaſure to drink your health in a bumper of excellent *Sitges*, by far the beſt of all the Catalonian wines, which in general have a roughneſs, with a certain *gout de terroir*.

Previous to my departure for Valencia, I reſume my favourite ſubject, and entertain you with the poets after the conqueſt of the Romans, and under the Goths, as introductory to what I ſhall ſay of the Caſtilian muſe when I come to illuſtrate its different eras, under its monarchs, till the ſucceſſion of a

french prince to the throne of Spain. I ſhall point out the various *Cancioneros*, or collections, that have been made of the Poets, the Spaniſh tranſlations of the greek and latin claſſics, and italian poets, as well as the Spaniſh writers who have profeſſionally treated of the art.

We read that the natives were fond of poetry time immemorial, and cultivated it with ſingular delight. Silius Italicus relates, that the people of Galicia compoſed and ſung verſes in their original tongue. Strabo extols the ingenuity of the *Turdetani*, and ſays that they had hiſtories and poems, as well as laws written in verſe, when it was firſt applied, as Horace ſays, to ſoften the manners,

and introduce order and decorum into civil ſociety. As to the primitive language of Spain we are ſtill in the dark concerning it, if we give it a greek or phœnician original, a ſimilar genius of poetry will naturally follow; if it ſhould be compared to the hebrew, which neither you nor I underſtand, I muſt refer you to a learned britiſh prelate, to whoſe refined and claſſical taſte we are indebted for a juſt idea of the poetry of that people.

After Spain had been conquered by the Romans, it inſenſibly became the ſeat of the muſes. Caius Julius Hyginus, the freedman of Auguſtus, and according to Suetonius, a Spaniard by birth, was the intimate friend of Ovid, and is ſaid to be the author of the

the aſtronomical poetry that goes under his name. In the ſame age flouriſhed Sextilius Hena, of whom Seneca ſpeaks but indifferently, taxing him with being more ingenious than learned, and ſo flighty and unequal withal, that he ſeemed to fall into the bombaſt and fuſtian which Cicero takes notice of in the poets of Cordova, who perhaps had a peculiarity of manner and diction, ſuch as even Livy the hiſtorian could not diveſt himſelf of. The city of Cordova produced three good poets under that monſter Nero, the two Senecas and Lucan. The tragedies of Seneca are the only latin ones extant of the ancients. Martial of Bilbilis, now Bambola in Aragon, lived under Domitian. He mentions ſeveral

other poets that made a figure in his days; ſuch as Unicus, his kinſman, whoſe brother was alſo a poet, Canius of Cadiz, Decianus of Merida, and Licianus alſo of Bilbilis. From this time down to the emperor Conſtantine, the poetic vein ſeems to have greatly declined. Juvencus, a prieſt, put the goſpel into hexameter verſe, and was the firſt eccleſiaſtical bard. Arator tranſlated the acts of the apoſtles into hexameters, and was followed by Sedulius. Latinus Pacatus, in a panegyric on the emperor Theodoſius, declares, that Spain abounded in valiant ſoldiers, eloquent orators, and excellent poets. St. Jerome ſpeaks of Aquilius Severus, a Spaniſh poet, who flouriſhed under Valentinian. Prudentius, who lived in the

fourth

fourth century, is equally read for the harmony of his numbers, as for the information he gives of the church hiſtory of his time.

We now come to the fifth century, when the ſavage goth overrun the dominions of Spain; though we muſt not charge theſe invaders with the ignorance and barbarity of the age, or make them the only deſpoilers of that taſte which the romans had left with the Spaniards. A more powerful cauſe operated on the mind: The gloom of ſuperſtition univerſally prevailed, the eccleſiaſtic poet full of holy zeal for religion, was afraid to break in on its myſteries, and his genius was cramped; without a ſpark of poetic fire he writ

hymns for the church, to ſtrengthen the devotion of the people, who were cautioned againſt the allegory of the gentiles; ſo that by degrees every idea of the ſublime and beautiful was loſt. Idacius however ſpeaks of a Spaniſh poet called Marobaudes, who was of illuſtrious birth, and an excellent orator, worthy to be claſſed with the ancients; adding that he flouriſhed under Theodoſius the 2nd, in whoſe days alſo lived Dracontius, who according to Iſidore writ an heroic poem on the creation of the world.

In the fifth century we find the biſhop Ciponius, who compoſed a poem in which he compares the ſtory of Phaeton to the fallen angels; a ſingular alluſion for a chriſtian prelate.

In

In the ſixth century flouriſhed Orencius, who is ſpoken of by Segebert Gemblacemcis, and writ a poem entitled *Commonitorium*, in hexameters and pentameters, publiſhed with notes by father Martin Antonio del Rio, and more correctly by Don Juan Tamayo de Salazar. In the ſeventh century we have St. Ildefonſus, archbiſhop of Toledo, who compoſed epigrams and epitaphs. St. Eugenius, archbiſhop of the ſame church, continued the poem of Dracontius on the creation of the world; a lofty theme! ſeemingly reſerved for the dignity of our own language, as the experience of many ages has evidently ſhewn, that it belonged to the divine Milton alone, to treat ſo ſublime a ſubject, and ſing

"Of man's firſt diſobedience."

LETTER

LETTER III.

Journey to Valencia. Latin Poetry under the Saracens. Library of Don Gregorio Mayans.

VALENCIA, 22nd MAY, 1778.

THE badneſs of roads, the want of poſt-horſes and carriages with the inconvenience of miſerable inns, are common topics for travellers in this country; but we muſt attribute it rather to their gothic laws and bad policy of government, than to the natural diſpoſition of the people. 'Till the old tenures are aboliſhed, as well as the variety of ſhackles with which induſtry is fettered, the traveller muſt bear every thing with

with patience; for otherwiſe, he only offers an idle and uſeleſs complaint! In every town and village the privilege of keeping an inn belongs to the lord of the manor or the corporation. If a private perſon without authority was to make the attempt he would incur a ſevere penalty, and be immediately puniſhed. Thus the privileged innholder fleeces the paſſenger with impunity, that he may pay an exorbitant rent to the landlord, beſides a conſiderable premium at entrance. In many places this occupation is deemed a public office, which every one in his turn is obliged to diſcharge, ſometimes for a term of three years. When the lot happens to fall on an indigent peaſant, what comfort can be found under his roof?

roof? How can ſuch an inn be provided with furniture, and what ſort of beds are to be expected from a man, who wrapped up in his cloak has ſlept all his life on the ground? But this is not all: provisions are another monopoly. It would be highly criminal for an inn-keeper to have a larder, or even wine in his cellar; every thing muſt be purchaſed at appointed places, where the wearied traveller muſt go or ſend his ſervants, and even then ſeldom finds what he wants; at theſe places, diſdain and ſcorn is the leaſt he is to expect, added to the reception of an enemy rather than a friend, and he curſes the landlord, his houſe, and his country; for which reaſon the natives, who know what they have to expect, ſeldom ſtir

from

from home, unleſs urged by the utmoſt neceſſity; by which means the country is unhoſpitable, and the traveller as much at a loſs as in the deſarts of Arabia.

Under theſe forbidding circumſtances, animated by that inſatiable paſſion, curioſity, I hired a carriage at Barcelona, drawn by mules, having previouſly provided myſelf with a kettle, knife, fork, and ſpoon, napkins, and a little ſtock of coffee, chocolate, tea, ſugar, &c. with a camp-bed, and other field equipage; thus I ſallied forth in queſt of adventures, having obtained a permit from the Captain-general of the province to travel with fire-arms, which was inſerted in my paſſport, and in this manner,

manner, travelling at the rate of about twenty miles a day, I arrived happily at this pleaſant city, delightfully ſituated near the ſea, in a beautiful vale, ſo highly eſteemed by the Moors, that they fondly conceived paradiſe to be ſeated in that part of heaven which hangs over it. No wonder then if the poetic vein ſhould partake of the happy influence of the climate, and the Valencian muſe be ſo remarkably inſpired.

In my laſt letter I am afraid I overpowered you with dulneſs, in wandering through the dark ages of gothic barbarity and ignorance; we now draw near to a more brilliant epocha, the invaſion of Spain by the Saracens in the eighth century; which brought

brought about a further revolution in the underſtanding of men, as well as in dominion; ſince with the arts and ſciences, the Arabs introduced a new ſtrain of imagery to enliven the fancy of the poet; the muſe partook of its bold metaphor and lofty flight, robed in the ſplendid garb of fiction, decked with oriental pearl, and heightened with all the powers of imagination! Without tracing the remote origin of poetry from the ſongs of the gothic bards or the iſlandic ſcalds, the poetical field becomes animated, and the Rhunic enchantments feeble and dim, when compared with the boundleſs luxuriance of the Eaſt: however, we muſt not loſe ſight of the latin muſe, when in queſt of her Caſtilian deſcendant, but once more behold

behold her with her diſhevelled locks, diſguiſed under gothic drapery. Amongſt theſe was Theodolphus, biſhop of Orleans, in the eighth century, though a native of Spain, whoſe poems have been publiſhed in France by father Sirmond: thoſe of Alvaro of Cordova, in the ninth century, and of Ciprian, arch-prieſt of Cordova, have been preſerved in Spain by the late father Florez, a learned monk and celebrated antiquary — Were it neceſſary, I could ſoon ſwell the liſt, for at that time poetry ſeemed to inflame every breaſt. Alvaro of Cordova particularly ſpeaks of it, as a vain amuſement and paſtime, in which St. Eulogius and himſelf had waſted much of their youth. It is from theſe writers, and the imperceptible decay

decay of the latin tongue, that we muſt trace the firſt dawn of the Caſtilian muſe; concerning which I mean to entertain you, when I have ranged a little further in this delightful ſpot, and beheld the variety of landſcapes, with which the bountebus hand of nature has every where enriched this charming and beautiful country.

In the courſe of my rambles amidſt orange groves, immenſe plantations of mulberry trees, and various pleaſant gardens, I have in vain ſought for the *Olivera de Valencia*, mentioned in Don Quixote. That famous and venerable tree, celebrated by floral games and rural ſports, now exiſts no more, though the olive is cul-

tivated with the greateſt aſſiduity and yields excellent oil. Hearing that there was a veſſel in the road of Valencia, bound for England, I have ſent you a jar of oil; and ſome excellent olives, which though perhaps not ſo luſcious as thoſe from Andaluſia, that Cicero was ſo fond of; yet I hope may ſtill find a place at your table. The culture of the olive is general in all this part of the country. The method of propagating it, is ſtill the ſame as mentioned by Virgil:

"Quin & caudicibus ſectis mirabile dictu
"Truditur e ſicco radix oleagina ligno."

GEORG. 2. V. 30.

I have had the pleaſure to become acquainted with the learned and courteous Don Gregorio Mayans, formerly

ly librarian to the king; who now lives here, having a good eſtate in this country, and to his politeneſs I am much indebted for many civilities, as well as great information. To give you an account of his numerous writings in almoſt every branch of literature and juriſprudence, would fill a volume. You have read his life of Cervantes, annexed to the Carteret edition of Don Quixote. He is now writing the life of Virgil, and is poſſeſſed of a moſt curious and valuable library, chiefly of the writers of his own country, with many ſcarce manuſcripts, and a numerous collection of the old Spaniſh tranſlations of the greek and latin claſſics. He is now in a very advanced age; but ſtill preſerves vivacity and a moſt af-

fable diſpoſition, added to a ſurpriſing application. During the intrigues of the jeſuits, who were afraid of him, his houſe and library were inveſted by an armed force; dragoons broke into his ſtudy, and took away many of his books by authority!—Oh, happy England! where the property of individuals is ſacred, and where the leaſt violation of liberty, meets with a ſpirited and juſt reſentment from the people; of which we have lately had ſo ſtriking an inſtance in a caſe of this nature. Such is the public ſpirit of our country, that if the moſt flagitious character is attacked either in his perſon or freedom—I ſay, were even ſuch, never to be oppreſſed, the ruſtic genius of liberty guards the injured party with

her ſhield, in hopes that a due ſenſe of her protection, may correct the heart and reform paſt errors;---but Don Gregorio Mayans is juſt at my door, and I muſt bid you farewell.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Attachment of the Spaniards to the Arabic numbers. Literature of the Spaniſh Jews.

VALENCIA 28th MAY 1778.

AS I poſtpone making you acquainted with the Caſtilian muſe till my arrival at Madrid, I cannot refrain from troubling you with ſome further reflections on the ſaracens, tending to elucidate the influence which their government had over poetic numbers. The very faces of the preſent inhabitants carry ſuch a ſtriking reſemblance of their anceſtors, and the african caſt of feature is

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ſo perceptible, that I am inſenſibly led into this ſubject.

It being common for the vanquiſhed to receive laws from the conqueror, it was natural that Spain ſhould ſhare the fate of arms, and receive with the ſaracen yoke their manners and cuſtoms. Theſe people having held a long poſſeſſion of this country, introduced their language, religion, and literature. The oriental ſtyle of poetry pervaded every mind, and the exuberant genius of its compoſition not only became univerſal, but in a manner worked the downfal of the roman numbers. Alvaro of Cordova, complains that the Spaniards had ſo totally forgotten the latin tongue, and given the preference to arabic,

that it was difficult even amongſt a thouſand people, to find one who could write a latin letter. So great was the attachment of the people to the chaldaic books, and the literature of the orientals, that they could write arabic with remarkable purity, and compoſe verſes with as much fluency and elegance as the arabians themſelves. Not only charmed with their poetry, they even embraced their religion; for Iſen, king of Cordova, who died in 795, had three thouſand apoſtates from chriſtianity, in his train.

Thus after a long period of near eight hundred years that the dominion of the arabs continued; the provinces of Spain ſplit into numerous dynaſties, flouriſhed in oriental literature

rature; whilſt the Caſtilians diſtinguiſhed themſelves in feats of arms, and were ſpilling their blood in defence of their territories; honour and love were ſung by the bards, and the arabic muſe furniſhed a numerous liſt of poets, whoſe names are recorded in the *Bibliotheca Hiſpana* of Don Nicolas Antonio; the oriental dictionary of Herbelot, and the arabic hiſpanic collection of manuſcripts in the eſcurial, lately publiſhed at Madrid, by Caſiri, a Maronite, in two volumes in folio, at his catholic majeſty's expence; where a numerous collection of poets may be found, hitherto unnoticed, all which are carefully preſerved in the valuable library of the eſcurial. In this claſs the province of Andaluſia particularly

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ly diſtinguiſhed itſelf; its inhabitants ſeemed animated with a peculiar brilliancy of compoſition. The two academies of Cordova and Seville ſhone beyond others. Their writers introduced harmony and numbers into the moſt ſerious ſubjects, leaving nothing either in religion or politics, nor in any branch of polite arts which did not partake of their verſe and poetical enthuſiaſm. Ebn Tarhun of Seville who flouriſhed in the year 691 of the hegira, raiſed his muſe to the moſt ſublime themes; he ſung of the creation of man; of the ſoul; and deſcribed the temple of Mecca. Dhihaldin Alkazary who flouriſhed in the ſixth age of the hegira, writ a poem called "the treaſure of poets"; while others employed themſelves in comments

comments on their moſt claſſical writers. Ebn Forgia, who lived in the fifth age of the hegira, writ a commentary on the famous poet Almotuabi, and Ebn Macrana commented upon the poem on animals by the perſian, Abiotman. Nor were the powers of verſification confined to the men, but extended equally to the fair ſex; ſeveral ladies gave proofs of their talents, thoſe of Andaluſia in particular, did honour to the muſes, and their works are preſerved in the eſcurial; but none were more famous than Maria Alphaiſuli of Seville, who was the Sappho of her time.

Beſides theſe celebrated geniuſſes, the fame of many others has been preſerved in the dictionaries of arabic

bic Spaniards, compiled by mahometan writers: ſuch as the dictionary arabic and hiſpanic, in the eſcurial, of all the caliphs, captains, philoſophers, poets, and learned ladies of Spain, in four large volumes, by Ebn Alkhali Mahomed Ben Abdalla in the year 710 of the hegira. Likewiſe the hiſtory of all the Spaniards and Africans, famous in arts and ſciences, particularly in poetry, written by Ben Mahomed Abu Naſſer Alphath of Seville, who lived in the ſixth age of the hegira; which book is in the king of France's library. Thus the arabic muſe flouriſhed while ſupported by the cimeter, and totally periſhed with its empire, when the victorious arms of Ferdinand and Iſabella drove the moors out of Granada.

It

It is to thoſe days we muſt alſo look up, to form an idea of the literature of the Spaniſh Jews, which was cheriſhed by Maſters from Babylon, where they had academies ſupported by themſelves; at a time when books were ſo ſcarce in Spain amongſt chriſtians, that in the beginning of the tenth century, one and the ſame bible, with St Jerom's epiſtles and other eccleſiaſtical works ſerved different monaſteries. In the year 907, Rabbi Moſes and his ſon Rabbi Enoch, having been taken by pirates, were ſold as ſlaves at Cordova, and redeemed by their brethren, who eſtabliſhed a ſchool at Cordova, of which Rabbi Moſes was appointed the head, who being deſirous of returning back to his own country,

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the mooriſh king of Cordova would not give his conſent, rejoicing that his hebrew ſubjects had maſters of their own religion at home, without the neceſſity of receiving them from a foreign univerſity; and every indulgence was granted them with reſpect to their worſhip, exhibiting a true ſpirit of toleration, worthy to be followed by their chriſtian ſucceſſors.

In the year 1039, Rabbi Ezechias was put to death at Babylon, who had ſucceeded Hai Gaon, whoſe ſons fled to Spain, by which the elderſhip of the Gaons became extinct, and their college was transferred to Cordova, from whence a ſwarm of hebrew poets iſſued forth, that have been noticed by various learned wri-

ters.

ters. Our countryman Thomas Hyde in his treatiſe *De ludis orientalibus*, mentions a hebrew poem on the game of cheſs by Aben Ezra.

In Portugal, Rabbi David Ben Solomon Ben David Iachiſa of Liſbon who lived in 1440, writ a treatiſe on hebrew poetry, which was tranſlated into latin by Genebrard, and printed in 1587, at the end of his *Iſagoge*, to read hebrew without points; it abounds with quotations of the different metres of the hebrew poetry in Spain. They may be very ſublime, but for my part I cannot read the language, either with points or without, and you will pardon this digreſſion: however it gives us an idea of the flouriſhing ſtate of their

ſchools

ſchools in Cordova, Seville, Granada, and Toledo, and we need not be ſurpriſed at the numerous hebrew proverbs, and modes of ſpeech, that have crept into the caſtilian language, and form a conſpicuous part of its phraſeology; for though king John IId baniſhed the Jews out of his kingdom, and the rigid and cruel inquiſition was afterwards eſtabliſhed to purge the nation of that ſect, yet all the horrors of that bloody tribunal have not been able completly to effect this ſanguinary purpoſe.

The Spaniſh language owes theſe people a particular obligation, for that curious verſion of the hebrew books of the old teſtament, which long

long after their expulſion they firſt printed at Ferrara, in 1553, in a gothic-ſpaniſh letter. A curious and ſcarce book, comprehending many energetic words, and peculiar expreſſions, not to be found in the dictionary of the Spaniſh academy, and which they ſeem to have cautiouſly avoided. This verſion is thought to have been made by that learned grammarian, David Kimchi, in the tenth century. Father Sarmiento has given many critical and judicious reaſons for attributing this verſion to the age of Kimchi, and cenſures father Simon greatly, for ſaying it was made at the time it was printed, when ſcarcely underſtood by the Jews, *quam vix Judæi intelligunt.* But you will ſay I am now going on at an extravagant rate. Should

this find you ſafe returned, as I hope it will, remember me to my reverend friend, your brother; tell him what he loſes in not ſtudying Spaniſh, and if he ſmiles at the conceit, remind him of Gaſpar Lindenberg, who has written *de non contemnendis ex lingua hiſpanica utilitatibus theologicis* (*a*).

Having now furniſhed you ſufficiently with hebrew, arabic, and gothic-ſpaniſh information, and poured in upon you a legion of hard words, added to a variety of uncouth and harſh-ſounding names, I ſhall in my next touch upon the proceedings of the *Trobadours*, and then ſet out for Madrid. Meanwhile I take my laſt farewell of jews and mahometans.

(*a*) See Bibliotheca Græca, of Fabricius.

LETTER V.

Proceedings of the Trobadours in the kingdom of Aragon, until its union to the crown of Caſtile. Character of the Marquis of Villena, an eminent poet.

VALENCIA, 31ſt MAY, 1778.

FROM the miſtaken laws and notions concerning inns on the road, you will entertain a very indifferent idea of the interior police and government in towns in this country. Valencia, however, in this reſpect, deſerves ſome exceptions, and I was not a little ſurprized at my return to my inn the ſecond night after my arrival, to ſee the city guarded by a

patrol, the men carrying lanthorns and poles in their hands like our London watchmen. This regulation is owing to the patriotic ſpirit of Don Don Joachin Foz, a worthy magiſtrate, who propoſed it for the relief of a number of poor men, heretofore employed in the making of fire-works, a conſiderable branch of induſtry in this capital, till a late proclamation aboliſhed them all over the kingdom. To find bread for a number of diſtreſſed families, he hit upon this laudable expedient. They walk the ſeveral ſtreets from eleven at night, till five in the morning, crying the hours and the weather, and keeping the peace as with us; but as this fine climate is ſeldom obſcured by dark nights or *cloudy mornings*, the ſerene atmoſphere

atmoſphere only affords them a monotony of expreſſion, and the word *ſereno*, becomes their conſtant clamour; from whence they have acquired the name of *Sereneros*, which added to the ſtillneſs of the town, recalled to my mind the beautiful night of Milton:

" Silence was pleaſed: now glow'd the firmament
" With living ſapphires: Heſperus that led
" The ſtarry hoſt rode brighteſt." ——

I have now an opportunity of improving myſelf in the poetry of the *Trobadours*; for the language of this country is a dialect of the provenzal, and introduced itſelf with their verſe in all thoſe parts where their numbers prevailed; ſuch as the counties of Languedoc, Rouſſillon, and Barcelona; kingdoms of Valencia, Murcia, Majorca, Minorca, and Sar-

dinia; where it remains to this day. The Spaniſh writers boaſt of their *Trobadours* as high as the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. William de Berguedam, a Catalan baron, was a *Trobadour*, and his poems are preſerved in the vatican library, (*a*) as well as thoſe of Nun de Mataplan (*b*); they alſo rank Raymond Lulli, of Majorca, in this claſs: but without looking ſo far back, I ſhall not go higher than the fourteenth century, when John the firſt, king of Aragon, who was alſo a poet, invited the *Trobadours* to ſettle in Barcelona, as we learn from Zurita, the learned and claſſic hiſtorian of that kingdom. The fifteenth century produced the celebrated Auſias March and James Roig, both of Valencia; the works of the former have been

(*a*) Codex 3204, 3205, and 3207.
(*b*) Codex 3204, and 3207.

turned

turned into Caſtilian verſe; the latter vented his ſpleen againſt women in a ſatyrical piece, called *Eſpil*, or "the Looking-glaſs," which ſeems to have been imitated by Prior. To court afterwards the favour of the fair ſex, Roig ſung the immaculate conception of the Virgin. This poet was phyſician to queen Mary of Aragon, wife to Alfonſo the fifth, and lived to be near a hundred years old. Though there are five editions of his works, none are later than 1562. The following lines may ſerve as a ſpecimen of his ſtyle:

Noranta cinch
O cent anys tinch
Dels quals cinquanta
O dos ſexanta
Del meus millors
Penes dolors
Man eſpletat.

In the ſixteenth century, Peter Seraphi diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the Valencian dialect, and his poems are prefixed to an edition of Auſias March, printed at Barcelona, in 1560. Many other bards are ſpoken of, though the exact period when they lived cannot be aſcertained. Among the reſt, Arnau Catalans (*a*), and Mola (*b*), whoſe works are in the vatican library, Moſſen Narias Vinyolles (*c*), Vincent Ferradis, Don Francl de Caſtelor, Miguel Perez, Juan de Verdancha and Moſſen Bernardo Fenollar, of all whom, there are provenzal

(*a*) Codex 3103.

(*b*) —— 3107.

(*c*) The appellation of Moſſen is peculiar to Valencia, in imitation of the French word *Monſieur*, in the ſame manner the Italians ſtile a foreigner *Monſu*.

poems in the *Cancionero General* printed at Antwerp, in 1573. Fenollar was a native of Catalonia, and in that dialect, wrote in couplets, a poem on the "contemplation of Chriſt" printed at Valencia, in 1493. They value themſelves greatly in this city on their early knowledge of the art of printing, when it was not in uſe in any other part of Spain; and ſhew a latin dictionary, entitled, *Comprehenſorium* (a), and a Salluſt, printed in 1475: So that they ſoon followed

(a) The *Comprehenſorium* has the following ſentence at the end: "Præſens hujus comprehenſorii præclarum opus Valentiæ impreſſum, anno. m,cccc,lxxv. Die vero xxiii. menſis februarii finit feliciter."—The univerſity in the city of Valencia was founded in 1470, two other were afterwards founded in the ſame province, viz. in the city of Gandia, in 1549, and at Ovibuela, in 1555.

the

the example of Oxford, where we find a book printed in 1468 (*a*), which was ſeveral years before Caxton practiſed that art in England.

The provenzals generally made uſe of the hendecaſyllable verſe: their poems conſiſted chiefly of ſonnets, paſtorals, and love ſongs, which gave riſe to a poetical tribunal, termed, *the court of love*; conſiſting of a ſelect number of eminent poets, who decided all controverſies amongſt themſelves on theſe ſubjects. The *Trobadours* were chiefly of the prime

(*a*) This book is in the public library at Cambridge. The title is, Expoſicio Sancti Jeronimi in Simbolum Apoſtolorum ad Papam Laurentium. At the end, Explicit expoſicio, &c. Impreſſa Oxonie & finita, an. dom. m,cccc,lxviii. —— See Hiſtory and Art of Printing, by P. Luckombe, M. T. A. London, 1771.

nobility

nobility of the kingdom; at length they carried the poetic licence ſo far, as to give much ſcandal to the public, and even to taint the reputation of the palace, as well as of the ladies of the court; for to make theſe entertainments more ſprightly, they invited minſtrels, ſtrollers, and buffoons, which in ſome meaſure juſtified the precautions taken afterwards againſt them. However the kings of Aragon, Don John the 1ſt, Don Martin, and Don Ferdinand, reformed theſe poetical conſiſtories, and brought them into high reputation, in which the laſt mentioned ſovereign was greatly aſſiſted by his kinſman, Don Henry of Aragon, Marquis of Villena. Theſe monarchs aſſiſted in perſon at their aſſemblies, where the verſes

verſes of the candidates were recited, and the premiums diſtributed with all the magnificence and ſplendor of royalty. The poets who had gained the prizes were crowned with laurel, amidſt the acclamations of the ſpectators, added to the joyful ſound of muſical inſtruments, ſucceeded by an elegant repaſt: they were then conveyed home with a courtly attendance, and preſented with an excluſive privilege to ſing, and read their verſes in public at pleaſure: a noble inſtitution! the continuance of which was ſo ardently wiſhed for, by that immortal genius, Michael de Cervantes, the contemporary of Shakeſpear, and I will almoſt venture to add, in every reſpect his equal.

The

The muſes ſeem to have taken great delight in the kingdom of Aragon. At the coronation of king Alfonſo the fourth, in 1328, the Infant Don Pedro, earl of Ribagorza, and brother to the king, attended by the principal nobility, exhibited dances and a variety of paſtorals, and ſongs, compoſed for that pleaſing event. The *Joglar*, or poet Ramuſet, ſung a paſtoral ſong compoſed by the earl; and Novelet, another *Joglar*, recited a poem of ſix hundred verſes by the ſame royal hand. The attachment to poetry ſeemed hereditary in the royal line of theſe princes, and continued in the Marquiſs of Villena, who compoſed the *Arte de la Gaya Sciencia*, for the uſe of the college of *Trobadours*, beſides many other poems, which were greatly

greatly admired, and frequently recited in public.

An hiſtorical poem of all the poets of Aragon, has been ſince compoſed by Don John Francis Andres de Uſtarroz, hiſtoriographer of Aragon, in imitation of that of the great Lope de Vega, of the poets of Caſtile. Uſtarroz compleated his in 1652, and thought firſt to entitle it *Parnaſſo Aragones*; but he altered his mind, and called it *Aganipe de Los Ciſnes Aragoneſes, celebrados in el clarin de la fama*: but it never was printed, and ſtill remains in manuſcript in the king's library at Madrid.

The union of the crown of Aragon with that of Caſtile, in the perſon of king

king Ferdinand the fifth, who married Iſabella, heireſs of Caſtile, ſeems to have eclipſed the fabling of the *Trobadours*. The Aragonians and Catalonians adopted the Caſtilian dialect, when the influence of that kingdom prevailed, and the cultivation of its language and manners paved the way to honour and preferment. The poet Boſcan, of Barcelona, tuned his lyre to the genius of Caſtile, and though a few bards attempted to ſupport a languiſhing muſe, Miguel Perez and juan de Verdancha, of Catalonia, introduced the Caſtilian metre and rhyme into their verſe.—About this time Columbus diſcovered a new world for the arms of Caſtile, which gave ſuch a ſplendour to its court, and dignity to its language, that the Caſtilian muſe ſhone like a new conſtellation

in

in the firmament! the wonderful exploits of intrepid heroes engroſſed univerſal attention; the boundleſs love of fame immortalized the gallant ſoldier, while the ſordid view of lucre diſhonoured the adventurer, though it repleniſhed the kingdom with gold. This unexpected event gave riſe to a variety of paſſions. The nation was rouſed; the great empire of Montezuma ceaſed in America; the Spaniſh ſtandard was diſplayed in the new world; and the effeminate *Trobadours*, and their ſongs, were entirely forgotten.

It remains for me, however, to ſay ſomething of the Marquis of Villena, whoſe great character appears conſpicuous in the poetical annals of his country;

country; being in a manner the father of poetry in Spain, as well as the brighteſt ornament of his age. This illuſtrious nobleman of the royal houſe of Aragon diſtinguiſhed himſelf early in poetry, philoſophy, and aſtrology, and with ſuch attachment to this laſt ſcience, that amongſt his ignorant countrymen he generally paſſed for a necromancer. As his family had been diſpoſſeſſed of the marquiſate of Villena, Henry III. had given him the earldom of Cangas, and afterwards procured him to be elected grand maſter of the military and religious order of Calatrava. For this purpoſe the marquis obtained a divorce from his wife under pretence of a natural impediment; then ceded the earldom of Cangas to the

crown that it might not fall into his order at his death, and was elected grand maſter: ſome of the knights however proteſted, and elected Don Luis de Guſman, a caſtilian nobleman; but the king went in perſon to Calatrava, put the marquis in poſſeſſion, and every thing was quiet till the death of the king, when Guzman who had fled to Rome renewed his claim before the pope, and the knights refuſed further obedience. A long ſuit was commenced, which laſted ſix years, and was referred to a general chapter of the order of *Ciſter* held in Burgundy. Whilſt this was depending, the marquis attended on his uncle Don Ferdinand of Aragon when he ſucceeded to that crown, and came with him to Barcelona, where

where he preſided at the conſiſtory of *Trobadours*, and writ a theatrical piece, in which, juſtice, truth, mercy, and peace, were the principal characters. In the midſt of theſe rejoicings news came in 1414 that he had loſt his election, and was deprived of his grandmaſterſhip, with an injunction to cohabit again with his lawful wife, which he complied with, and became a ſuitor at the court of king John II. then an infant, for an indemnification for his earldom of Cangas. After much ſolicitation he obtained the lordſhip of Iniesta, where he retired with his wife, and gave himſelf up to philoſophy and the muſes. Beſides a tranſlation of Dante into proſe, he tranſlated the Æneis of Virgil in ſpaniſh verſe, at the

requeſt of his kinſman John king of Navarre, and intended to dedicate it to that monarch, for which purpoſe he had affixed a painting, in which the king of Navarre is repreſented ſitting on his throne, and the marquis preſenting him his book; but when all this was compleated, he dropped his deſign, as that monarch went to war with the king of Caſtile, on which account he avoided all further communication with him. His moſt famous piece was his book on the *Gaya Sciencia*, which is a complete ſyſtem of poetry, rhetoric and oratory, beſides deſcribing all the ceremonies of the *Trobadours* at their public exhibitions. This work he dedicated to his illuſtrious and learned friend the marquis of Santillana.

After

After ſuffering much from the gout, he died in retirement in 1434; his fine library was burned under the notion of his knowledge of magic, and the biſhop of Segovia, confeſſor to the king who was charged with this commiſſion, is ſaid to have reſerved moſt of the books for himſelf.

Thus ended this great philoſopher and friend of the muſes, who was contemporary with our poet Lydgate, and had juſt reached the days of the renowned Chaucer, the father of engliſh poetry, whom he greatly reſembled. With him he ran the career of courts, and experienced the ficklenes of royal favour, equally preferring retirement and ſtudy, and like him, had the merit of refining

the language and poetry of his country. Thus the names of both bards have been jointly handed down with veneration, by a grateful poſterity! If their verſe wanted melody, it was owing to the inaccuracy of meaſure, and imperfection of language at that time, when both the Engliſh and Caſtillians ſeem more to have courted the god Mars, than Apollo; for while the Caſtilians were daily encroaching on the Moors, the victorious banners of England were triumphant in Paris, where our Henry VI. was crowned king of France.

Alas, poor Macias! truſty eſquire of the grand maſter Villena, hapleſs bard, ſhould I forget thee! who didſt ſing of love, and feel the ſmart of its embittered arrow: impriſoned for exceſs

of

of paſſion, after the fair object of thy love had been diſpoſed of; and had given away her hand in thy abſence: loaded with chains by Villena for the follies of youth thou felleſt ſudden, when bewailing thy fate; the Gallician muſe ſtrewed flowers over thy tomb, thy verſe is treaſured up in the eſcurial, and the portugueſe bard claims thee as a parent, for this was thy ſong:

Cativo de Mina triſtura
Ja todos prenden eſpanto,
E preguntan, que ventura
Foy, que me atormenta tanto.
Mas non ſe no mundo amigo,
Que mais de meu quebranto
Diga, deſto que vos digo
Que ben ſee nunca devia,
Al penſar que faz folia.

Cuyde ſubir en alteza
Por cobrar mayor eſtado,
E cay in tal pobreza,
Que moyro deſemparado
Con peſar e con deſeſo
Que vos diray malfadado,
Loque yo he ben ovejo
Quando o loco cay mays alto
Sobir prende mayor ſalto.

LETTER VI.

Journey from Valencia to Madrid.—Battle of Almanza.—La Mancha.

MADRID, 12th JUNE, 1778.

I NOW date this from Madrid, where I arrived after a journey of nine days from Valencia, by the new road lately made from that city to this town, which is every where marked out and rendered paſſable, though not compleated farther from Madrid than the town of *Ocana*, nine leagues from hence; ſo far the road is excellent, and has mile ſtones; but when the remainder will be finiſhed, or the intended canal of Caſtile, for inland

inland navigation be compleated, no one can tell; for while the family compact has its ſway, and they waſte their treaſures in ſchemes of boundleſs ambition; they are only graſping at a ſhadow and impoveriſhing their people. It is true, they have not as yet taken off the maſk, and keep ſtill an ambaſſador at our court; but for my part, I have no doubt of ſiniſter deſigns which will ſoon appear evident; and that the ideas of Caſtilian honour are phantoms, by which we muſt not ſuffer ourſelves to be deceived in a political light, whatever notions we may have been induced to form of individuals.

In the courſe of my journey to this place, I paſſed over the plains of

Almanza.

Almanza where a pillar proclaims the victory of the French and Spaniards over the allied army in 1707, when moſt of the Engliſh were killed or taken priſoners, having been ſhamefully abandoned by the Portugueze horſe at the firſt charge, and the ſucceſs of that day fixed the crown of Spain on Philip Duke of Anjou, father to the preſent king, adding new dominions to the reſtleſs and ambitious houſe of Bourbon.

Our ſoldiers ſpilled their blood in that war, as they had done before in that cauſe. In the reign of Charles the II. the Engliſh troops obtained a compleat victory at the battle of Evora, and took the rich tent and all the baggage of Don John of Auſtria,

the

the Spaniſh general; for which our Charles generouſly ordered the ſum of forty thouſand crowns to be diſtributed among the ſoldiery.—What do you think was the largeſs of our magnanimous ally?—Three pounds of ſnuff to each company! which when given to the Engliſh ſoldiers, they toſſed up in the air out of contempt and diſdain (*a*).

(*a*) The following paſſage from a judicious writer, ſhews the obligation of the Portugueze nation to England ſo fully, and carries ſuch conviction with it, that I am induced to make the quotation. "I have ſeen, he ſays, a large collection of privileges granted by ſeveral kings of Portugal to the Engliſh beyond thoſe enjoyed by the Portugueze ſubjects, I know not whether I may call them *charters*. Theſe were copied from the archives of the kingdom in the *Torre del Tumbo*, but the moſt antient was of king Ferdinand whoſe reign began not till 1367. There are ſeveral of John the Firſt, his ſucceſſor, ſome of which

I was

I was muſing on this ſubject, and had bewildered myſelf in political reflec-

refer to others granted by his predeceſſors. By this it appears that the Engliſh had a great hand in ſetting up the kingdom of Portugal, and if the hiſtorians of this country deceive us not, they had as great a ſhare in protecting and ſecuring it, as often as it hath been brought into danger by a foreign enemy. Twice it was like to be wholly over-run by the Caſtilians, who had poſſeſſed themſelves of the greateſt part of the kingdom, and gained a numerous party of the nobility over to their ſide, and had been very near taking Liſbon itſelf; the firſt time in the reign of Ferdinand, the laſt of the lawful deſcendants from Alfonſo Henriquez, the other time while John the Firſt, from whom all that had ſucceeded him derived their titles, was ſtruggling for the crown, and they have been as often relieved by the Engliſh and enabled to carry the war into the enemy's country; our princes of the blood condeſcending to go in perſon to their aſſiſtance, firſt Edmund Langley Earl of Cambridge, and afterwards John of Gaunt Duke of Lancaſter; and if after the ſeveral flouriſhing reigns that ſucceeded, they were at laſt reduced under the Spaniſh yoke, it was becauſe

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tions till I entered the plains of *La Mancha*. There I recovered my good humour; ſaw many a fat laughing Sancho, drank good wine at *Cuidad Real*, ſpent a night at the village *del Toboſo*, the reſidence of the peerleſs Dulcinea; ſaw the windmills which the diſtracted Quixote miſtook for

they were wanting to themſelves, the Engliſh having ſent out a gallant fleet and army to their reſcue, under Don Antonio, whom they had made their king, but they would not accept deliverance, and ſo they remained under the power of their enemies. Theſe ſmall forces ſent by king Charles, after his reſtoration, by their unparalleled valour, ſoon put an end to the quarrel, and the victories obtained by their means being ſeconded, as they were, by the vigilance, dexterity and conduct of the ſame king's miniſters, recovered Portugal and reſtored it to the condition in which it now remains." See "An account of the court of Portugal under the reign of the preſent king Don Pedro IId." London, 1700.

giants,

giants, and at a *Venta*, or inn in La Mancha, was pleaſed with the ſimplicity of a *Manchega* girl, who waited upon me at ſupper, and aſking her if ſhe had ever heard of ſuch a perſon as Don Quixote, anſwered, "O yes Sir, often; they ſay he is lately dead." But this will not ſeem extraordinary when I was told of a field Officer, a perſon of merit, that after long ſervice had riſen from a private ſoldier, who, when in company, and the diſcourſe fell on Don Quixote, ſaid, he had often heard of him, and aſked "whether he had not been Colonel of the Regiment of Flanders."

Having been in this capital before, I ſpeak with more boldneſs of their manners and cuſtoms. You muſt not however

however expect from me details of this ſort; or imagine a variety of entertainments, as in London or Paris; or ſuch open ſcenes of diſſipation and luxury as are daily exhibited in thoſe brilliant capitals; but though the walk is more private, I believe the inhabitants, whatever they may be in ſcience or refinement, are not behind hand with them in vice or debauchery, as they are daily laviſhing the treaſures of Mexico and Peru in private amours, and expence, diveſted of magnificence or ſplendour.

A ſet of gay ſparks had lately introduced an aſſembly for dancing, where the manners of the *Adamites* were followed, and blind fidlers were employed for greater precaution.---Theſe depraved

depraved knights were decorated at theſe revels with a ribband and badge, but they were ſoon diſcovered, and rigorouſly puniſhed. If ſuch is the depravity of youth, you will naturally ſuppoſe a liberal and good education is wanting, as well as agreeable and pleaſing ſociety, added to thoſe convivial hours, where the wiſeſt man need not be aſhamed to be ſeen; but theſe are unknown, and though the Spaniards enjoy ſuch a variety of choice, and delicious wines, they ſeem ignorant of the good qualities of the grape, and if they are ſeldom taxed with the irregularities of inebriation, they are equally ſtrangers to its generous effuſions. Their own countryman Roderic Sanchez, biſhop of Palencia, who dedicated his

hiſtory to Henry the 4th, king of Caſtile, ſays, "that the Spaniards are more inclined to keep their wine in the cellar than to drink it, and chuſe rather to ſell than partake of it, and that the fair ſex and youth dread it like poiſon(*a*);" inſomuch that if you except the open hearted Biſcayners, and a few boon companions of honeſt Sancho Panza, the circling glaſs is unknown, and the chearful moment of the poet never thought of, who ſaid

"Nunç eſt bibendum."----

(*a*) Vinum quoque malunt in cellario quam in ventre, quippe qui vendere potius quam guſtare præligunt; fœminæ, vero, & pueri bacchum ut venenum fugiunt.---Roderici Santii Epiſcopi Palentini Hiſtoria, Hiſpanica, pars prima, caput iv.

LETTER VII.

Poetry of Galicia and Portugal.

MADRID, 20th JUNE, 1778.

THE plains of Almanza had led me in my laſt letter, into a ſtrain of hiſtorical and military reflections, which imperceptibly drew on a political rant, when I intended to ſpeak to you of the galician and portugueze muſe, previous to my account of the Poets of Caſtile, which you will now expect from me, being at preſent on that claſſic ſpot where the mighty emperor Charles held his court; where many of their beſt poets

ſung; where Quevedo beſides his diſtinguiſhed talents as a poet, gave ſuch ſhining proofs of refined wit and profound erudition; and finally, where the ever admired Cervantes firſt exhibited his unparalleled hero.

The galician muſe was diſtinguiſhed at an early period, though her flights were not loſty, and chiefly ſupported in the cauſe of religion, by the numerous votaries who reſorted to the ſhrine of St. James, at Compoſtella. The poetical turn prevailed ſo far, as to be the chief employment of both ſexes. King Alfonſo, the wiſe, received his education in Galicia, and in that dialect compoſed canticles for the church, which, with other pieces of

of the times are preſerved in the cathedral of Toledo. Some of them were publiſhed by Zuniga the hiſtorian, in his annals of Seville, as far as they related to Alfonſo's father, Ferdinand the third, who conquered Seville from the Moors. The poems of Macias, a native of Padron in Galicia, were in that dialect, though taken for Portugueze by Argote de Molina. The poet Juan de Mena laments the tragical end of Macias, as does Juan Rodrignez del Padron in his poem of *gozos de Amor*, "Enjoyments of Love," who was ſo affected at the news of his death that he retired into a convent, where he ended his days. Garci Sanchez de Badojoz, an elegant poet, ſpeaks feelingly of Macias in his poem *Infierno*

de Amor, "Hell of Love," and utters a deſponding wiſh to be interred along with him, and ſhare his reputation, which he expreſſes in the following pathetic ſtanza,

Si te plaze, que mis dias
Yo feneſca mal logrado
Tan en breve.

Plegate qui con Macias
Ser mereſco ſepultado,
Y decir deve.

Do la ſepultara ſea,
Una tierra los crio,
Una muerte los llevo,
Una gloria los poſſea.

The cataſtrophe of this unhappy poet, and the imprudence of his paſſion, has afforded a moral tale to all ſucceſſive bards; many of his poems are

are in the *Cancionero de Poetas Antiguos* of Juan Alfonſo de Baena, in the Eſcurial, and give a true idea of the galician ſtyle of poetry, from whence we may fairly trace the Portugueze idiom, as the conqueſt and peopling of Portugal under Henry of Burgundy, was effected by people from the north of Galicia, in conjunction with foreigners. Many places in the north of Portugal acquired the ſame names with thoſe in Galicia, as it happened in England after the coming in, of the Saxons; Galicia then extended further to the ſouth, including all thoſe diſtricts between the rivers Duero, and Minho, which did not appertain to Luſitania. Ptolemy diſtinguiſhes two claſſes of people in Galicia, the *Bra-*

cenſes, whoſe capital was at Braga, and the *Lucenſes* at Lugo. When Portugal was erected into a ſeparate kingdom, they encroached on the borders, ſo that what had belonged to Galicia, now became Portugal, and under their monarchs a new court ſupported a variation, and gave a national character to their language, of which Bluteau, an Engliſhman, and chaplain to Queen Catherine, conſort of our Charles the 2d, has given a moſt ample and learned vocabulary.

The portugueſe muſe made a figure in the 12th century, under Alfonſo, the 1ſt king of Portugal, in whoſe reign Gonzalo Henriquez, and Egas Moniz, are the firſt poets in the records

cords of that kingdom. In the next century, king Dennis was a poet, as was alſo his natural ſon Alfonſo Sanchez. The 14th century furniſhed king Alfonſo the 4th, a favourite of the muſes, whoſe poems have been collected by father Bernardo Brito. His ſon king Peter was likewiſe a poet. In the reign of king John 1ſt, the Infant Don Pedro compoſed various ſonnets, in praiſe of Vaſco Lobeira, the ſuppoſed author of the celebrated romance of *Amadis of Gaul*, of which ſo much has been ſaid, and who furniſhed ſo many admirable ſcenes to the animated pencil of Cervantes. In the 15th century, Henriquez Cayado diſtinguiſhed himſelf under king Emanuel, as did afterwards the Infant Don Pedro, ſon of king John

ed. At this time the Latin muſe was again invoked by the Portugueſe, and the purity of the Auguſtan age ſeemed to revive with Achilles Stacio, Diego Pereyra, Morais, Coelho, and the jeſuit Luis de la Cruz, who wrote ſome latin tragedies; which made the hiſtorian Faria ſay, that in his country every fountain was an Hippocrene, and every hill a Parnaſſus. The 16th century produced Bernardino Ribeira, Franciſco Saa de Miranda, Michael de Cabedo, the famous comedian Gil Vicente and his daughter Paula, who not only aſſiſted her father in writing his comedies, but alſo compoſed others of her own invention. All theſe flouriſhed under John IIId. to whom we ought to add the poets under the reign of the unfortunate

king

king Sebaſtian, ſuch as Euſtacio de Faria, Geronimo de Corte Real, Jorge de Montemayor, and above all, the illuſtrious Camoens, whoſe beautiful poem of the Luſiad alone, would have been ſufficient, to perpetuate the poetical character of his country; though Galicia lays a claim to his origin, as deſcended from a family of that kingdom.

The Portugueſe *Cancionero* contains many more poets than the Spaniſh one, as that of Caſtile has only one hundred and twenty poets, and that of Portugal one hundred and fifty; the Spaniſh one, only includes thoſe of the fifteenth century, that of Portugal goes as high as king Peter, who died in 1367. Amongſt others,

of

of this amorous monarch, accept of the following, addreſſed to the lady of his affections, whom he ſtiles his ſecond God.

Mais dyna de ſer ſervida
Que ſenhora de eſte mundo!
Vos ſoes o meu Deos ſegundo
Vos ſoes meu bem de eſta vida.

You will think me a book-worm indeed, for looking ſo far back into antiquity, and after the indifferent account I have given you of ſociety in this place, will conclude that theſe purſuits waſte away all my time, which might be much better employed; however I do not neglect exerciſe, and for this purpoſe have purchaſed a beautiful Andaluſian gennet

gennet, from a gentleman of Cordova, who boaſts of its race. Though he would not win a plate at Newmarket, nor perhaps hold out at a fox chace, with an Engliſh hunter; he has nevertheleſs numerous qualities that give pleaſure to his rider; the docility of his temper, the goodneſs of his mouth, and the agility and quickneſs of his motions, with his elegant ſhape, form his principal character; while his flowing mane and well furniſhed tail, added to his ſtately carriage, give him a noble and graceful appearance;—his colour *Iſabel*, a name given in alluſion to the whimſical vow, and ſhift of Iſabella Clara Eugenia, governeſs of the Netherlands, at the memorable ſiege of Oſtend, which laſted from 1601 till 1604,

1604, and who wanted to perſuade the ladies of her court to follow her example, which they imitated in having their linen dyed.—As to the ſwiftneſs of my courſer I muſt however inform you that he was generated by the wind, and ſo they all are at Aranjuez, if you will believe the inſcription over the king's ſtables at that place *ex vento gravidas.* If you will not truſt to the king's equerry, nor rely upon what has been ſaid by Varro, or Columella, I muſt refer you to Virgil,

. . . . . Et ſæpe ſine ullis
Conjugiis vento gravidæ, mirabile dictu
Saxa per, & ſcopulos & depreſſas convalles
Diffugiunt.

GEORG. Lib. 3.

P. S. Excuſe

P. S. Excuſe a digreſſion from a Quixotic traveller, in favour of the famous *Roſinante*, though not generated by the wind, and moreover ſo ſteady, that he would not mend his pace if all the mares of the *Deheſa*, or paſtures of Cordova, were in company. In the very firſt chapter, ſpeaking of this ſteed, the text ſays, *Que tenia mas quartos que un Real.* The drift of which conſiſts in a pun, upon the double meaning of the word *Quarto*, which ſignifies a piece of copper money, as well as a defect in a horſe's hoof, and as there are ſeventeen *quartos* in the ſilver coin, called *Real*, it alludes to the numberleſs defects in *Roſinante*'s hoof, and cannot be literally tranſlated. This paſſage greatly puzzled Peter Motteux, the publiſher

publiſher of a tranſlation of Don Quixote, by ſeveral hands, in 1733, who alters the ſenſe of it by rendering it thus, "Whoſe bones ſtuck out "like the corners of a Spaniſh real." I ſuppoſe he had ſeen ſome of the old cut Spaniſh money which ſuggeſted this erroneous idea. Smollet has continued the ſame blunder, and *learnedly* added by way of note, that a Spaniſh real is a coin of a very irregular ſhape not unlike the figure in geometry, called *Trapezium*.

I have now on my table a treatiſe on farriery, by one of the king's farriers, *The Gibſon* of Spain, entitled, *Inſtituciones de albeyteria por el Bachiller Franciſco Garcia Cabrero, herrador, y albeytar de las cavallerizas del Rey. Madrid*

drid 1775. In which he gives the following account of the *quarto*. "To explain the reaſon why this accident is called by the name of a *quarto* I am perplexed, not being certain, nor convinced by the reaſons given me by different perſons; ſome ſay it is becauſe it falls upon the fourth part of the hoof, others, becauſe the animal by this means loſes the fourth part of its value; to the firſt I anſwer, that I am unacquainted with the exact dimenſions of a *quarto*; to the ſecond that if the accident is of the compound kind, though the animal was ever ſo valuable before, it becomes then not only not worth a *quarto*, but not even an *ochavo*."

LETTER VIII.

Origin and progreſs of national poetry in Caſtile.

TOLEDO, 29th JUNE, 1778.

I HAVE made an excurſion to the city of Toledo, twelve leagues ſouth of Madrid, and dignified with the title of imperial, after its conqueſt from the Moors, by Alfonſo the 6th, who ſtiled himſelf emperor, and was crowned here; ſince which the city has bore for their armorial enſigns, an emperor ſeated in a royal chair in his robes, holding a drawn ſword in his right hand, and a mund in his left.

I ſhall

I ſhall leave to travel writers to deſcribe the numerous edifices and public ſtructures, as well as churches, pictures, and ſtately monuments to be ſeen in this place. The cathedral alone would require a volume; amongſt its many ſuperb tombs, I particularly noticed that of Don Alvaro de Luna, conſtable of Caſtile, the unfortunate favourite of king John ad, and that of Cardinal Mendoza, archbiſhop of Toledo, ſon to that illuſtrious poet, the Marquiſs of Santillana. With reſpect to the variety of ornaments in this antient cathedral, the critic has a noble field of matter; as for the unwieldy groupe of figures in this church, ſo much admired by the inhabitants, and called, I know not for what rea-

ſon, *El Tranſparente*; one of their own writers, Don Antonio Ponz, a modern critic, fairly acknowledges, "That for any uſe or ornament, it affords, this immenſe maſs of marble might as well have remained buried for ever in the quarry of Carrara!" I ſhall ſay nothing of the badneſs and crooked form of the ſtreets, ſtill more inconvenient from the ſituation of the city on a hill, much leſs can be offered in favour of the environs of Toledo, which are bleak and in great want of trees, though Martial, in one of his epigrams to Licinius, repreſents the country in his time, on the bank of the Tagus, to have been much favoured with ſhade.

Æſtus ſerenos aureo franges Tago
Obſcurus umbris arborum.

But

But it is now high time to proceed on my favourite ſubject.—When the Latin tongue, which had been univerſal in Spain, became totally corrupted by ſuch different invaſions, and variety of nations, and diſpoſitions, the Caſtilian language is ſuppoſed to have inſenſibly aroſe about the 12th century. — The oriental poetry had flouriſhed near five hundred years, and the Provenzal and Galician dialects about one hundred, ſo that when the genius of Caſtilian poetry firſt began to expand and acquire a national form, it muſt have borrowed of courſe from the ſpirit of its predeceſſors, and had its origin, like all antient languages, in ſinging the exploits of heroes, ſounding forth the praiſe of the Deity, and tuning

their lyre to the cauſe of religion; ſuch were their *Cantares*, of which the *Cancioneros* have preſerved ample collections.—I have enlarged upon the ſtyle and character of theſe ſeveral people, in order to form from thence ſome fixed idea, or rule proper to be aſſigned, as an origin to the poetry of Caſtile, tracing the ſources of its ſingular variety, and diſcovering that want of unity in its character, in proportion as it has imitated ſuch a diverſity of models. The oriental ſtyle in the firſt place, delights in ſtrained alluſions, and extravagant metaphors, adorned with exuberance of expreſſion, and an admirable variety and brilliancy of ſentiment: it is happy in the harmony of its numbers, and when it riſes to ſolemn and majeſtic

ſubjects

ſubjects, is ſaid to loſe itſelf in enthuſiaſm and rapture. The Provenzal poetry on the other hand is reſtricted by the laws of the Trobadours, and being fettered in the golden chains of love, becomes languid and faint, when it attempts to deſcribe the thunder of Jove, or the anger of military heroes, with the clangour of war.

Such was the ſtock from whence the Caſtilian bee was to draw an inexhauſtible ſtore, and to ſip every flower, inriching itſelf with a fund that was to charm future ages, and convey to the mind the moſt permanent and pleaſing ſenſations. When they followed the manner of the ori-

entals, the Trobadours, or the Italians, it proceeded from a natural impulſe, which leads to imitate the objects conſtantly in view; when they copied the Greeks, and Romans, it owed its effect to a more refined and elevated genius.----The various objects of the bards ſucceſſively altered with the times; the atchievements of Charlemagne and the twelve peers of France, drew the attention of the French and Italians; then came the croiſades and the feats of knights inſpired with a military zeal for religion; after theſe were at an end, the mind was ſtill exalted and attached to the marvellous, ſuited to the prevailing manners, ſo that the fictitious heroes and knight errants eaſily ſucceeded, and the tale was embelliſhed with

with the amorous novel, in which the Spaniſh warriors were introduced with ſuch a deluſive medley of falſehood and truth, that ſome have taken fable for hiſtory, and others have rejected fact for romance. At laſt a ſurpriſing genius aroſe, the univerſal admiration of mankind, who with the invincible lance of Don Quixote, drove for ever all thoſe extravagant heroes out of the field.

As muſic is compoſed of certain tones and cadences, it was neceſſary that what was to be ſung ſhould have a proper metre adapted to muſical harmony, from whence the firſt origin of verſe, in every part of the world; that the Spaniſh language is admirably adapted to poetic harmony,

ny, has been generally allowed, and has been evidently proved by an excellent judge, Franciſco Salinas, of Burgos, born in 1513, celebrated by his contemporaries for his great ſkill in muſic, as a performer and a theoriſt; and though afflicted with blindneſs from his infancy, inſtead of depreſſing his mind, it tended to improve his muſical genius in a wonderful manner. He went to Rome in the retinue of Don Pedro Sarmiento, archbiſhop of Compoſtella, and after twenty years ſpent in Italy, returned to Salamanca, where he held a profeſſorſhip of muſic, and died at the age of ſeventy-ſeven, univerſally admired and regretted.

In tracing then the poetry of Caſtile through its various modulations from

from its origin down to the preſent time, we may divide it into four periods; the firſt from its early dawn till the reign of king John the 2d; the next from this king to the days of Charles the 5th; the third from that emperor down to Philip the 4th; and the laſt from that reign down to Charles the 2d, the laſt Auſtrian monarch, when the genius of Homer and Virgil ſeems to have fled from the banks of the Manzanares, and to have fixed its reſidence on thoſe of the Thames. In this manner its firſt ſtate may be compared to its infancy, the ſecond to its juvenile days, the third to its vigour and manhood, and the fourth to its old age and decline.

The

The Caſtilian bard made his firſt effort in an age when there was little refinement in language, and the ear unaccuſtomed to melodious ſounds, or ſkilful enough to be affected by the harmonious numbers of the antients, much leſs in a ſituation to imitate them. The moſt antient poet known in Caſtile is not of a higher date than the beginning of the thirteenth century. This is Gonſalo Berceo, native of the town of Berceo, in Guypuſcoa and a monk of the convent of St. Milan, from whoſe archives it appears that he lived in 1220, he wrote the lives of St. Milan, St. Dominic of Silos, and other Spaniſh ſaints in verſe, of twelve, thirteen and fourteen ſyllables, as well as a poem on the battle of Simancas,

where

where the Moors were defeated by Ramiro the 2d, king of Leon. Theſe with ſome others are in manuſcript, in the convent of St. Milan. There is likewiſe a poem of his on the maſs in the royal library at Madrid, but nothing more has been printed than his life of St. Dominic, wherein he acquaints his readers that he attempted his poem in Spaniſh, being totally unable to perform it in Latin.

Quiero fer una proſa en roman paladino
En qual ſuele el pueblo fablar á vecino
Ca non ſo tan letrado por fer otro latino.

The ſimilitude and analogy obſerved between the latin and Spaniſh verſe, ſuch as the verſe of eight feet with the Trocaic, that of five with the Adonic, that of eleven with the

the Sapphic Aſclepediad, or Choriambic, and other ſimilar compoſitions, ſhew their origin from the greek and latin models; but with reſpect to imitation, we muſt rather look for it amongſt the Trobadours and Italians, from whom they borrowed the *Soneto*, *Madrigal*, *Cancion*, *Terceto*, *Octava Rima*, and ſimilar poems, different from the ancient *Coplas* of Spain.

The *Coplas*, called *Redondillas*, or Roundelays, are of great antiquity. The Spaniſh poets of thoſe days, when they wrote in latin, made uſe of the rhyme of the roundelays, and from them perhaps it was adopted in the national poetry. An epitaph in the

the church of Toledo, of the year 1333, has the following lines.

Mitibus hic mitis, tamen hoſtibus eſſe ſtudebat
Hoſtis, fulgebat propter certamina litis.

Which divided by the *Ceſura* of rhyme, would run thus.

Mitibus hic mitis,
Tamen hoſtibus eſſe ſtudebat
Hoſtis, fulgebat
Propter certamina litis.

Another epitaph in the ſame church:

Toleti natus, cujus generoſa propago
Moribus ornatus fuit hic probitatis imago:
Largus, magnificus, electus mendonienſis,
Donis inmenſis, cunctorum verus amicus.

Which divided in the ſame manner, will be,

Toleti

Toleti natus,
Cujus generoſa propago
Moribus ornatus
Fuit hic probitatis imago
Largus, magnificus
Electus Mendionenſis,
Donis inmenſis
Cunctorum verus amicus.

In the early days of their poetry, we often find verſe of four, five, ſix and eight ſyllables, in the works of the infant Don Manuel, who died in 1362, and alſo made uſe of the Hendecaſyllable verſe, as did the marquis of Santillana.

The verſes of twelve ſyllables were ſtyled *De arte mayor*, and were uſed by king Alfonſo the Wiſe, in his poem of *Las querelas*, or "Complaints" againſt the rebellion of his undutiful ſon Sancho; but the verſe of thirteen

teen and fourteen feet are the moſt ancient metre, being uſed by Bereeo the monk, and king Alfonſo abovementioned.

As to rhyme, we know it exiſted before the Goths extended themſelves to the ſouth, or the Saracens penetrated into the weſt: it has been thought by ſome writers, that even in the Auguſtan age the poets had a partiality for rhyme at the end, like the Leonine verſe, inſtances of which are ſeen in Horace (*a*), Ovid (*b*), Propertius (*c*), and Marti-

(*a*) Non ſatis eſt pulchra eſſe poemata dulcia ſunto
Et quocumque volent, animum auditoris agunto.
ART. POET.

(*b*) Quot cœlum ſtellas, tot habet tua Roma puellas.
DE ART AMAND. LIB. I.

(*c*) Nec tibi tirrhena ſolvatur funis arena.
LIB. I. ELEG. 17.

al (*a*), and the ſimilſonance was conſidered as a figure of rhetoric.---However that might have been, the monkiſh writers, without any feeling for the true graces of poetry, were delighted with jingling ſounds, thinking with conſonance and rhyme to ſupply the place of genius and fancy. To perceive the ſimilitude between their barbarous latin verſe and the Spaniſh rhyme of thoſe days, we have only to compare them together.---An epitaph in the cathedral of Toledo, of 1326, is as follows:

Hoc poſitus tumulo fuit expers improbitatis,
Intus & extra fuit immenſœ probitatis,
Largus, magnificus fuit, & dans omnia gratis,
Et ſpeculum generis, totius fons bonitatis.

(*d*) Diligo præſtantem, non odi cinna negantem.
LIB. 7. EPIG. 42.

This

This ſtrophe preſerves the ſame rhyme, as thoſe of the monk Berceo, with reſpect to the conſonance of the four verſes.---Let us now compare it with a Spaniſh epitaph of the year 1388.

D. Sancho obiſpo de avila como ſenor honrado,
Dio muy buen exemplo, como fue buen prelado,
Fizo eſte monaſterio de S. Benito llamado
Y diole muy grandes algos, por do es ſubſtentado.

Verſes ending with an echo were uſed by Juan de la Encina, and are with his other poems in the *Cancionero general* printed at Seville, in 1535. The laſt part of the penultimate word is echoed by a ſimilar one, thus,

El mas querido, y inflamado, amado,
Pueſto en el duro, y ſin conſuelo, ſuelo,
Sufre por mi, de tierra y cielo, yelo,
En un peſebre deſechado, echado.

Many new kind of verſe, ſuch as ſapphic, adonic, phaleucian and others, were introduced by Bermudez, in his tragedies of *Nize*. The verſe called *Eſdrujulo* was firſt uſed by Cayraſco de Figueroa, and always ends with dactyls, or words that have the accent on the antipenultimate ſyllable, with the two laſt ſyllables ſhort, thus,

Al prado de ſan Geronimo
Con mis zelos, y mi cantaro.
Salgo a vengarme de un picaro
Que nove el eſtilo xacaro.

Vicente Eſpinel is commonly ſaid to be the inventor of the verſes called after him *Eſpinelas*, but this is controverted by Don Gregorio Mayans, who attributes them to Juan Angel, who uſed them in his poem of *Tragitrium/o*

in

in 1523, and only allows to Eſpinel the merit of having improved the metre. Eſpinel alſo wrote a romance under the feigned name of *El Eſcudero Marcos de Obregon*, deſcribing the follies of his youth, from whence the French writer La Sage has interwoven ſeveral of his characters in his romance of Gil Blas.

Other verſes were called *Felicianas*, according to Lopez de Vega, from the inventreſs of that name, who ſpent ſome time in men's apparel in the univerſity of Salamanca.---It would be an uſeleſs taſk to relate the variety of inventions which ſprang up in a barbarous age, ſuch as the retrogade verſe, the labyrinth, the cento, the acroſtic, and other puerile fancies, of which Cara-

muel, a Spaniſh monk in the laſt century, has compiled two folio volumes under the title of *Rythmica* and *Metramica*, which were reprinted in Italy: but I will not take up more of your time with ſuch trifles, and haſten to ſpeak of blank verſe, which is of great antiquity in Spain, where they ſeem as ſenſible of its dignity and majeſty as we are in England. They had it at the ſame time that the famous Triſſino firſt introduced it in Italy, for his contemporary Alonſo de Fuentes, of Seville, publiſhed a poem there in 1547, in blank verſe, intitled *La Suma de Philoſophia*. Triſſino died in 1550.

I this moment receive the agreeable news of your ſafe return to England.

land. The melancholy account you give me of parties, and faction at home, grieves me exceedingly; but I truſt in the ſpirit of our people and our numerous reſources to overcome both foreign and domeſtic enemies. Foreign nations, unacquainted with our conſtitution and government, and who only hear the miſrepreſentations and clamour of faction, imagine we are undone; the French flatter themſelves to have in a manner ſecured to themſelves, the poſſeſſion of America, under the veil of an alliance with the congreſs; and the Spaniards fondly conceive that Gibraltar will fall an eaſy prey into their hands; how egregiouſly they are deceived in this, as well as in their romantic ideas of conquer-

ing Jamaica, I truſt to providence and our own vigorous exertions to ſhew! you tell me we have a fine fleet in the Bay, under the command of an experienced officer, who, if he falls in with the enemy, no doubt will give a good account of them, and, I hope, return home, crowned with laurels, to receive the thanks of his countrymen. Methinks I ſee the gallant veteran entering London in triumph, like a Roman conſul, with the ſpoils of the enemy, amidſt the ſhouts and acclamations of a grateful people, repeating inceſſantly his victories! I muſt ſay no more, poets you know, are apt to have viſions, let me wiſh this may be a true one, and that in all parts of the world our

fleets

fleets and arms may ever be victorious, and, to uſe the expreſſion of a great writer, "aſſert triumphantly the rights and honour of Great-Britain, as far as waters roll, and as winds can waft them."

Adieu!

LETTER IX.

King Alfonſo the Wiſe improves the Spaniſh Language.----Singular poem of the archprieſt of Hita.

TOLEDO, 12th JULY, 1778.

I AM deſirous, whilſt in this city, of ſaying ſomething more to you of the royal poet Alfonſo, the 10th king of Caſtile, who held his court here, and was ſirnamed the Wiſe, on account of his great learning and knowledge of aſtronomy. It was here that he cauſed thoſe famous aſtronomical tables to be drawn up, called Alfonſine, after his name, which are carefully

carefully preſerved in the cathedral of Seville.---He perfected the Spaniſh code, named *Las Siete Partidas*, from their being divided into ſeven parts, correſponding with the ſeven letters of his name. He moreover introduced the national language into all public writings; an example which was ſoon after followed with us, by our Edward the 3d, who gave orders for the aboliſhing of the Norman tongue in all public acts and judicial proceedings.

King Alfonſo cauſed a great many books to be tranſlated into the Caſtilian language, and beſides giving the example by ſeveral compoſitions of his own in proſe and verſe, he ſpent large ſums of money for the advancement

advancement of ſcience, and extended his bounty and generoſity on all occaſions with the utmoſt magnificence.---Amongſt other extraordinary performances of this great king, there is a poem written in 1272, called *Theſoro*, which is in the royal library of Madrid, being a treatiſe on the philoſopher's ſtone, written in cyphers, and in magical characters. This book is thought to have belonged to the library of the marquis of Villena, and to have been one of thoſe ſaved by the biſhop of Segovia. Gil Gonzales de Avila, in his hiſtory of the church of Seville, has given the introduction to this work in Spaniſh verſe, in which the royal poet ſays he had invited a famous chemiſt from Alexandria, in Egypt, to teach him

him the art of making gold, which they had frequently practiſed together, and had acquired a perfect knowledge of the philoſopher's ſtone. The verſe runs thus.

La piedra que llaman philoſophal
Sabia facer, e me la enſeno.
Fizimos la juntos; deſpues ſolo yo;
Conque muchas veres crecio mi caudal,
E viendo que puede facerſe eſta tal,
De muchas maneras, mas ſiempre una coſa
Yo vos propongo la menos penoſa,
Por mas excelente, e mas principal (*a*).

Amongſt other numerous works of this ſovereign, there is a folio manu-

(*a*) That is---he knew how to make the philoſopher's ſtone, and taught it me. We made it together, and I afterwards made it by myſelf, ſo that I often increaſed my ſtock; and finding that it is to be made in different ways, but always one and the ſame thing, I propoſe to you the leaſt expenſive, as the compleateſt and beſt method.

ſcript,

ſcript, in the library of Toledo, written on paper in Spaniſh, on miſcellaneous ſubjects. Amongſt the reſt, a tract relating to St. Patrick's Purgatory, in Ireland, which perhaps may be the origin of the famous viſion of Odænius, mentioned by ſome Iriſh writers. Alfonſo is thought to have firſt introduced paper in Spain, at leaſt amongſt the Chriſtians, ſuppoſing its uſe to have been known amongſt the Mahometans; for Sarmiento mentions having ſeen a paper manuſcript in 1261. I ſhall not, however, enter into further details relating to the works of this monarch, he was a competitor for the empire, with Richard Duke of Cornwall, who was choſen emperor, but not having fortune or

power

power ſufficient to ſupport its dignity, was obliged to return to England, and they elected another prince. As for king Alfonſo, his expences reduced him to great ſtraights; nor could his ſuppoſed knowledge of the philoſopher's ſtone, furniſh gold enough without laying heavy taxes on his ſubjects: while this monarch was bent upon aſtronomical purſuits, inſtead of the intereſt of his people, and in lieu of obſerving the motions of his ſubjects, was watching thoſe of the ſtars in the crown of Ariadne; his ſecond ſon Sancho rebelled againſt him, ſnatched his own crown from his head, and got poſſeſſion of the kingdom. For this undutiful act, and his ſucceſſive victories over the Moors,

the

the Spaniſh hiſtorians have called him *Don Sancho El Bravo* (*a*).

(*a*) Alfonſo the Wiſe had two ſons. Ferdinand the eldeſt and Sancho. The former died in the life time of his father, and the latter uſurped the crown, on which his nephew Alfonſo, Ferdinand's ſon, then a minor, fled to France, and was proclaimed king on the death of Alfonſo the Wiſe, but Sancho's party prevailed. This Alfonſo ſirnamed *La Cerda*, from a long hair on his back, married Maude of France, and left a ſon, Lewis, who returned to Spain, and ceding his right to the crown, accepted lands from king Ferdinand the 4th, and married Leonora Guzman, daughter of Alonſo Perez de Guzman, founder of the ducal-houſe of Medina Sidonia, by whom he left an only daughter, *Iſabella La Cerda*, firſt married to Don Rodrigo Alvarez de Aſturias, by whom ſhe had no iſſue, and afterwards to Bernard de Bearne, baſtard ſon of the famous Gaſton Phœbus Count de Foix Lord of Bearne; on this marriage de Bearne was created Count of Medina Celi, and a large eſtate ſettled on Iſabella his wife, in 1367, by Henry the 2d, ſirnamed the Baſtard, on condition of her renouncing again for herſelf and her heirs, all preten-

A ſingular

A ſingular poet and ſatyriſt now occurs, who has eſcaped the reſearches of Don Nicolas Antonio, and moſt other biographers, till diſcovered by Don Lewis Velazquez, knight of the order of St. James. This is Juan Ruiz, arch-prieſt of Hita, whoſe works are in manuſcript, in the library of Toledo, and who flouriſhed in the year 1330. The manuſcript is in a very imperfect condition, with many ſheets tore out, and others unintelligible, therefore I ſhall confine myſelf to a ſpecimen of a ſatyrical piece, as given by Velaſquez.

ſions to the crown of Caſtile, as grand daughter of Alfonſo, proclaimed king at the death of Alfonſo the Wiſe. Afterwards Don Lewis de Beurne the 5th, Count of Medina Celi, deſcended from Iſabella, was created Duke of Medina Celi in 1491, by Ferdinand and Iſabel.

This poem deſcribes a conteſt between the time of *Eating Meat* and *Lent Time*, wherein the former is defeated on *Aſh Wedneſday*, and remains in a dejected ſtate till Holy-week, when recovering his ſpirits, he enters the liſts and ſends a challenge to *Lent*, by his ſecond *Don Breakfaſt*, fixing the time for combat on Eaſter-Sunday. *Lent*, not thinking himſelf obliged to receive a challenge from one whom he has vanquiſhed, finding himſelf moreover enfeebled, and not being able to procure a freſh ſupply of ſea fiſh, to recruit his conſtitution, promiſes to meet him at Jeruſalem, dreſſes himſelf like a pilgrim and makes his eſcape on Holy-Saturday. Two potent emperors arrive in the world; *Don Fleſh* and *Don Love*. They both make

make a triumphal entry: the various muſical inſtruments are deſcribed, as well as the reception they meet with, from all ranks of people; a conteſt ariſes concerning who is to receive *Don Love*: each party offers his reaſons and claim for a preference, but he refuſes them, and ſhews a predileſtion to the author, as an old ſervant of the family, and goes to his houſe; but the apartments being too ſmall for ſuch ſplendid gueſts, a tent is fixed, and here a poetical deſcription is given of the four ſeaſons of the year, in the nature of a viſion. The author, with the confidence of an old ſervant, enquires of *Don Love*, where he had been during his abſence? he anſwers, in the mild climate of Andaluſia during winter, and

complains, that coming to Toledo in the beginning of lent, they had ſhut the gates of the city againſt him; on which he applied to ſeveral convents, but none would receive him, and at laſt was obliged to paſs the lent in the town of Caſtro, where he was kindly entertained. Finally recovering his ſtrength after lent, he went to the fair of Alcala, and from thence wandering about the country, had left the author in a melancholy mood, who not pleaſed with a ſolitary life, conſulted an old trot, called *Trota Conventos*. This ſorry old woman adviſes him to make love to a nun, and paints the delight of ſuch amours. *Trota Conventos* applies to a nun, to whom ſhe had rendered former ſervices, ſpeaks in favour of the archprieſt,

archprieſt, and acts as procureſs between them. A long dialogue enſues, with the perſuaſions of the old Jezabel on one ſide, and the reſiſtance and inconveniences alledged by the nun on the other. *Trota Conventos* diſplays the character of the archprieſt;—the nun at laſt conſents to receive him on honourable terms, and dies in two months. The archprieſt is much grieved, and engages the old hag to procure him a wife, ſhe finds out a moor, who refuſes the offer---the author relates the ſongs he had compoſed for jews and moors, adapted to various inſtruments, and proper for dances, and to be ſung by blind men and ſtrollers.—*Trota Conventos* dies, the ravages of death are deſcribed, as well as the ingratitude

of relations and heirs. The epitaph of *Trota Conventos* is given. Preventatives are offered againſt the ſudden acts of death, which are to be guarded againſt with the ſhield of good works.

Such is the main ſcope of this whimſical poem, many parts of which are unintelligible at preſent. One of the laſt verſes ſays expreſſly that it was finiſhed in the year 1378.—The work is not deſtitute of poetical invention, and ſeems to be a violent ſatyr on the times, abounding with moral reflections, as well as lively deſcriptions of the vices of ſome of the principal perſonages of the court. At the ſame time the poet ſeems to laugh in his eaſy chair, and might have furniſhed

furniſhed a model for Rabelais, who probably never ſaw this poem:— from the freedom with which the archprieſt has painted the vices of the times, we may call him the Petronius of Spain. Some of his verſes have the ſame metre as the greek and latin hexameters, for inſtance,

Fis vos pequeno libro, de teſta mas que de gloſa,
Non creo que es pequeno, ant es mui gran ploſa.

The preſent archbiſhop of Toledo, Don Franciſco de Laranzana has very generouſly opened the library of the cathedral for the uſe of the public, and I might mention other ancient poets, whoſe works are in the *Cancionero* of Juan Alfonſo de Baena, collected in the reign of king John the 2d, which includes thoſe who pre-

ceded, as well as contemporary poets; but it would make no amends for the time loſt in looking over ſuch writings, totally diveſted of genius or taſte, hardly one of them able even to make a good rhyme; you will already have perceived that I partake of the gloom that hangs over this city; or, as the French call it, *ennui*. Its very gates ſeem to proclaim it, for over the principal one, the gate *del Cambron*, an inſcription is placed under the ſtatue of St. Leocadia, the tutelary patroneſs of the city, in which ſhe is requeſted to free them from ſuch a complaint:

Tu noſtra civis inclita,
Tu es patrona vernula,
Ab urbis hujus termino
Procul repelle tædium.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Second period of Spaniſh Poetry in the 15th century.---Character of King John the ſecond, and of his ſon King Henry the fourth of Caſtile.

MADRID, 20th JULY, 1778.

AS the heats begin to be exceſſive here, I ſhall ſoon make an excurſion to St. Ildefonſo, a royal ſeat which ſtands in a very high ſituation amidſt the Guadarrama mountains, that are covered with ſnow till the middle of June: there the court enjoy a cool and pleaſant ſummer, and behold a ſecond ſpring after their departure from Aranjuez, which they generally leave towards the end of June

June. In autumn they remove again to the Eſcurial, ſpend part of the winter in the new palace at Madrid, and are occaſionally at the *Caſa del Campo*, a ſmall villa near Madrid; or at the *Pardo*, about two leagues from hence; and thus with the different hunting parties of the ſeaſon; theſe regal conſtellations perform their annual orbits with great punctuality and ſameneſs.---On ſuch occaſions, every thing is extravagantly dear at theſe places; which becomes a heavy charge upon all the foreign miniſters, whoſe duty obliges them to attend on the monarch; and ſince Lord Rochford's time I underſtand an extraordinary allowance is made to our ambaſſadors for this purpoſe.---Let me now make a retrogade move-

ment,

ment, and recall your attention to the court of John the ſecond, king of Caſtile, ſon of Henry the third and Catharine daughter of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaſter, by Conſtance of Caſtile. Under this prince we may properly fix the ſecond period of Spaniſh poetry, in the fifteenth century, and I ſhall juſt give you a ſlight ſketch of ſome of the principal characters of his court. The king himſelf was a great favourite of the muſes and an excellent judge of poetical merit; he underſtood and ſpoke latin fluently, and was not only a good poet, but moreover, encouraged all thoſe that excelled in that art, delighting in the converſation of men of genius and talents; under ſuch a Mecenas, no wonder that the nobles

ſhould

ſhould follow the royal example, and the palace of king John reſemble the court of Apollo: but with all theſe amiable qualities, this indolent prince ſuffered himſelf to be governed by his favourites and minions, which brought on him the hatred of his ſubjects, who ſhewed their ſpirit of reſentment to ſuch a degree, that the king cauſed his Privado, Don Alvaro de Luna, to be beheaded at Valladolid.----I ſhall ſay nothing more of the marquis of Villena, as he lived in retirement under this reign, where we find Fernan Perez de Guzman, Lord of Barres, who was both an hiſtorian and a poet; the printed *Cancioneros* abound with his works, and ſome are in the manuſcript one of Juan Alfonſo de Baena; he is author of a poem intitled

titled *Las ſentencias y coplas de bien vivir*, printed at Liſbon in 1564, and alſo publiſhed the chronicle of king John. He likewiſe wrote in proſe the lives of all the great men who flouriſhed in that king's reign in arms, or letters, intitled *Claros varones Eſpanoles*, a book greatly eſteemed: In its imitation Fernando del Pulgar afterwards writ another, dedicated to Iſabella queen of Caſtile, printed at Madrid in 1678, at the end of the epitome of the chronicle of king John the ſecond. —— Guzman had for contemporary that illuſtrious nobleman Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, marquis of Santillana, who lived till the time of Henry the fourth, ſon to John the ſecond. By order of king John he drew up a collection of moral

ral proverbs for the inſtruction of prince Henry his ſon, and for the ſame purpoſe alſo wrote a treatiſe on favourites, intitled *Doctrinal de privados*, in which Don Alvaro de Luna is repreſented as ſpeaker, and gives advice to his ſucceſſor, how he ſhould behave like a good miniſter, and not follow his treacherous example.---He likewiſe made a collection of antient proverbs in the Spaniſh language, which were reprinted with other curious pieces of Spaniſh literature in 1737, by Don Gregorio Mayans.---The marquis ſupported a literary correſpondence with the lord high conſtable of Portugal, Don Pedro, ſon of the Infant Don Pedro, duke of Coimbra; at the requeſt of this prince, he wrote him a long letter, ſending

ſending him a collection of his poems, and giving him a circumſtantial account of the ſtate of poetry in Spain. Father Labbe ſays, that amongſt the king of France's manuſcripts, they poſſeſs ſeveral of the marquis's poems and letters. All the great men of his time were deſirous of a literary correſpondence with him. Don Gomez Manrique, a great poet, and brother to Don Roderic, firſt Count of Paredes, and uncle to Don George Manrique, another celebrated poet, wrote a poem to the marquis, requeſting his works, and compoſed ſeveral others in his praiſe. This great man died in 1458, to the great regret of all his acquaintance. The famous poet Juan de Mena particularly laments this event in a poem

em he wrote on the occaſion, intitled *Coronacion*, wherein he ſuppoſed himſelf to have been carried up to Parnaſſus, and ſeen the muſes and virtues crown the marquis with laurels, and with much elegance ſings his praiſes as a philoſopher, a poet, a ſoldier, and a chriſtian.

The firſt Duke of Infantado was ſon to this illuſtrious Marquis, and directed in his will, that all the poems of his father, as well as his library, ſhould be intailed in the family along with the eſtate, and be preſerved in his palace of Guadalaxara, where it is ſaid there is a very curious collection of manuſcripts. This ducal family has built at Guadalaxara a ſumptuous chapel to depoſit the remains

mains of their anceſtors, in imitation of that famous one at the Eſcurial; and is alſo called a pantheon; it contains twenty-ſix urns arranged in proper order, with a great profuſion of curious marble, and coſt 1,082,770 reals vellon, or £12181.

After having ſaid ſo much of the marquis of Santillana, I come to the great Juan de Mena, of Cordova, his friend, whoſe poetical talents were ſo admired by king John, that he retained him conſtantly at his court, and would frequently correct his verſes with his own hand. The moſt celebrated piece of this poet is his *Labyrintho*, in three hundred *octavas*, from whence it is called *Las tres cientas de Juan de Mena*, divided into ſeven

parts according to the planets, beginning with the moon, and finiſhing with ſaturn, which has been learnedly commented upon by Fernan Nunez de Guzman, ſtiled *El Pinciano*, to diſtinguiſh him from the hiſtoriographer I before mentioned. Mena's poems have gone through a variety of editions, the oldeſt was printed at Sarragoſſa in 1515. That of Seville in 1528 contains more poems, and they were reprinted at Antwerp in 1552.

I muſt mention a very polite and accompliſhed gentleman, who juſt reached the days of King John; his proſe compoſitions are eſtimable for their antiquity, as well as purity and elegance of language. This was Pedro

dro Lopez de Ayala. He tranſlated Livy into Spaniſh, much about the time that it firſt appeared in French by Peter Berchorius, a Benedictine monk. He alſo tranſlated, from the Italian. the fall of princes of Boccacio, and the Trojan hiſtory of Guido Colonna; Boetius *de Conſolatione Philoſophiæ*, and Iſidore *de Summo Bono*. He lived under four kings, Peter, Henry 2d, John 1ſt, and Henry 3d, of all which he compiled the chronicles; the three firſt were printed, but that of Henry the 3d is ſtill in manuſcript, in the convent of St. Martin, in Madrid. In this work there is an original letter, from Bajazet to Henry 3d, which occaſioned the famous embaſſy to Tamerlane, by Henry, who ſent Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, as his

ambaſſador to that ſovereign, an account of which was publiſhed by Argote de Molina.---Ayala is taxed with great partiality and flattery in favour of the rebel Henry againſt his brother king Peter, whom he ſtabbed with his own hand, and then uſurped his dominions. The true chronicle of Peter was written by John de Caſtro biſhop of Jaen, but was ſuppreſſed by the partizans of Henry, after he came to the throne.-----Before I take my leave of king John, let me mention another writer that will afford you much entertainment, that is the bachelor Fernan Gomez de Ciudad Real, who was forty-four years phyſician to king John ad, and of courſe well acquainted with all the intrigues of his court; his letters

were

were publiſhed at Burgos in 1499, and throw great light on many actions of the principal characters of his time. This book was lately reprinted at Madrid (*a*). There is a letter amongſt them from the poet Juan de Mena, complaining of the behaviour of the biſhop of Cuenca, in burning and ſecreting the books of the marquiſs of Villena (*b*).

(*a*) Centon epiſtolario de Gomez de Ciudad Real, generaciones y Semblanzas de Perez de Guſman i claros varones de Caſtilla y letras de F. del Pulgar. Madrid 1775.

(*b*) In a former letter I ſaid it was the biſhop of Segovia, who burned the books of the marquiſs of Villena, miſled by a modern Spaniſh writer, when I ſhould have ſaid, that it was Don Lope Barrientes biſhop of Cuenca. Juan de Mena tells us he burned a hundred books by order of the king, and ſecreted many others.—He deſires Gomez to ſend him a letter to be ſhewn to the king, in order to get the books

The depravity of the age gave riſe to another ſatyriſt, whoſe verſe is mentioned in Don Quixote, under the feigned name of *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*, a ſatyrical poem, written in a paſtoral dialogue, conſiſting of thirty-five ſtanzas between the ſhepherd *Mingo*, or *Dominic*, and *Gil Arebato*, deſcribing the vices of king Henry the fourth, ſon to John the ſecond, reproaching him as a bad ſhepherd, who took no care of his flock. The ſluttering ſhepherd, *Tartamudo*, is Moſes, *Chriſtoval Mexia* is the Meſſiah, and the *Meco Moro* is Mahomet. All

again out of the biſhop's hands, who he adds had ſeen no more of the books than the king of Morocco. Mena is very ſolicitous for the character of the marquiſs, that the remains of his library ſhould not fall to ſo unworthy an heir, who had ſo little reſpect for his fame.

their

their flocks are repreſented as grazing promiſcuouſly, without any regulation or government, to the ruin and downfall of the kingdom, in which Chriſtians, Jews, and Mahometans, lived intermixed, without controul or ſubordination; for thus we muſt underſtand the tenth couplet.

Moderrado con el ſueno
No lo cura de almagrar,
Porque no entiende de dar
Cuenta de ello a ningun dueno.
Quanto yo no amoldaria
Lo de Chriſtoval Mexia,
Ni del otro tartamudo,
Ni del Meco Moro agudo:
Todo va por una via!

Some have attributed this poem to Juan de Mena, others to Fernan del Pulgar, of which opinion is the hiſto-

rian Mariana; and when we conſider the comment of Pulgar, always printed along with the poem, explaining the moſt obſcure paſſages, it ſeems to be a probable conjecture. As to the vices of Henry the fourth, they exceed the pen of the moſt poignant ſatyriſt. He ſtands charged with having conſented to the infidelity of his queen, with Betran de la Cueva, who for recompence was created count of Ledeſma. The princeſs Jane was ſuppoſed to be the iſſue of this amour; her legitimacy was publicly conteſted, which occaſioned much bloodſhed, and ended in her being obliged to retire to a convent, ſtigmatized with the name of *La Bertrandina*; and Henry's ſiſter Iſabella became heireſs of the crown of Caſtile,

tile, which by her marriage with Ferdinand of Aragon, became united for ever to that kingdom.

We now draw near to a more poliſhed age, and to new events under the auſpicious reign of Ferdinand and Iſabel; another great genius appears on the horizon, the poet Juan de la Encina, who went to Jeruſalem with the marquis of Tariſa, and has deſcribed that expedition in verſe; while we claſs him in point of time as the laſt poet of the age, we muſt exalt him to the firſt rank for the harmony and power of his numbers. He tranſlated the eclogues of Virgil, applying the circumſtances to the events of Ferdinand and Iſabel, in whoſe praiſe he wrote his poem of

Triumſo

Triumfo de la fama, and his *Arte de poeſia Caſtellana* in proſe, dedicated to the prince Don John, all which he completed, between the age of fourteen and twenty-five, as appears from the collection of his works printed at Saragoſſa, in 1516.

The Caſtilian muſe now began to aſſume a loftier flight. Juan de Mena introduced an elegance of expreſſion, George Manrique and his nephew (*a*) poliſhed her ſtyle, and em-

(*a*) George Manrique the nephew, was ſon of Roderic Count of Paredes, and wrote an elegy on the death of his father, printed at Madrid, with a gloſſary, in 1632, in 8vo, along with the *Coplas* of *Mingo Revulgo*, the moral proverbs of the marquis of Santillana, and other fugitive pieces.---The moral pieces of George Manrique, the uncle, were printed at Antwerp in 1594, with a comment by Franciſco Guzman.

beliſhed it with more eaſy rhyme. The marquis of Santillana diſembarraſſed her from the fetters of couplets, and made her acquainted with the verſification of the Provenzals and Italians. Finally, Juan de la Encina ſhewed her to be equal to the powers of the drama, following the example of the marquis of Villena in tranſlating the latin poets, and in laying down precepts for the art, which was as much as could be expected at that time.----Beſides the *Cancionero* of Baena, a further *Cancionero general* was compiled by Hernan del Caſtillo, including all the poets from Juan de Mena down to the editor, and has gone through ſeveral editions, the third was at Seville in 1535, and another at Antwerp, in 1573.

LETTER XI.

The third period, or golden age of Spaniſh poetry, in the 16th century.

MADRID, 23d JULY, 1778.

I Went laſt night to take leave of ſome acquaintance previous to my departure for St. Ildefonſo, and ſpent the evening in a moſt agreeable party, at one of thoſe private aſſemblies, that go by the name of *Tertulias*, but from whence they have derived this appellation I can not inform you.—In many families theſe little parties are held every evening, and conſiſt of a number of ſelect friends, who enliven this friendly ſociety.

As

As ſoon as the company begins to aſſemble, they divide into different apartments; refreſhments are immediately diſtributed, conſiſting of ſherbets, ſweetmeats, and chocolate: a chearful and lively converſation is ſupported on a variety of pleaſing ſubjects, in which the prelate, the ſoldier, and the civilian, come in for a ſhare, and the ladies contribute their part. In another apartment a more grave ſet are amuſed with cards, while a few gallant knights, with the crimſon inſignia of chivalry on their breaſts, divide themſelves amongſt the fair liſteners, and the amorous glance is enlivened by ſparkling eyes and every expreſſion of feature:—while one echoes the ſoft murmurs of love, a delicate finger

ſounds

ſounds the guitarre, and adds to its harmony with a ſong.—Each party is happy, no tireſome ceremony interrupts their felicity, the very idea of jealouſy is ſtruck out of the rubric; wit and good humour are the principal purſuits, added to a chearful mind, unbent with every ſocial attribute:—no plodding about politics or the debts of the nation.---Happy moments thus glide away imperceptibly, till the uſual hour comes, and then every one retires in ſilence, pleaſed and contented!----Amongſt a variety of entertaining ſubjects that are occaſionally diſcuſſed in this entertaining junto, they happened laſt night to ſpeak of the golden age of poetry in Spain, which was agreed upon, to have taken place in the ſixteenth century,

Plate 4.

R.Hancock f

tury, with the re-eſtabliſhment of letters in that kingdom, when a new field was opened to the muſes, who, baniſhed from the Eaſt, liſtened to the few Spaniards who courted them, and accepted of their addreſſes; at the time that a true taſte was reviving in Italy, under the influence of Sannazar, Bembo, and Arioſto, and the muſes recovering from that drooping ſtate they had fallen into at the death of Petrarch. The firſt promoters of this brilliant revolution in Spain, were Juan Boſcan, Garcilaſo de la Vega, the great Don Diego de Mendoza, Gutierre de Cetinia, and Don Lewis de Haro, who were followed by Franciſco Saa de Miranda Pedro de Padilla, Gregorio Hernandez de Velaſco and others; who, beſides the Italian

rhyme,

rhyme, adorned their own language with the further embelliſhments required by the muſes, ſuch as lively invention, graceful ſtyle, purity of diction, and dignity of ſentiment, equal to elevated ſubjects: to ſhew, however, the foibles of the human mind, with the baneful effect of envy, when genius makes a new effort; a ſet of men was not wanting, who looked with a jealous eye on the verſification of the Italians; and ſuch is the effect of prejudice, that it even worked upon the moſt ingenuous minds. Boſcan acknowledges, that he attempted to introduce the new metre, at the perſuaſion of Navagero, the Venetian ambaſſador at the court of Charles the 5th, and he happily ſucceeded, having compoſed various ſonnets and paſtorals,

paſtorals, in the Italian metre, which met with great acceptation, notwithſtanding the other party endeavoured to leſſen their merit, by calling ſuch poets by the name of *Petrarquiſts*. Boſcan tranſlated the fable of Leander and Hero from the Greek of Muſeus and a tragedy of Euripides, which ſerved to poliſh the ſtyle of his contemporary and friend Garcilaſo de la Vega. Boſcan further improved his mind by travel in Germany and Italy, in the ſervice of the emperor Charles, reaping the ſame advantages as Chaucer had done before him with us, and may be truly ſaid to be the Petrarch of Spain.

The great Don Diego de Mendoza merits a more particular inveſtiga-

tion from his exalted character as a poet, a ſoldier, and a ſtateſman. This illuſtrious perſonage was of the noble houſe of Mendoza, being ſon of Don Ignacio Lopez de Mendoza, ſecond count of Tendilla, and marquis of Mondejar. Our poet was born in Granada, about the year 1500, and educated in the univerſity of Salamanca, where he applied himſelf cloſely to the latin, greek, hebrew, and arabic languages. Beſides the advantages of his high birth, he enjoyed thoſe of court favour, and was honoured with the moſt eminent dignities; for he was a *Commandeur* of the order of Alcantara, counſellor of ſtate to the emperor Charles, and his ambaſſador at Venice and at Rome, as well as at the famous Council of Trent,

Trent, where he made a conſpicuous figure. His long reſidence in Italy, added to his natural genius, gave him every opportunity of improvement, inſomuch that he was reckoned one of the politeſt ſcholars, and moſt accompliſhed gentlemen of his time. He is ſaid to have had a moſt forbidding aſpect, added to a peculiar ſeverity of temper, which was of great prejudice to him when he was governor of Sienna; he ſeems to have conveyed it to his verſe, which is in general harſh, for he faintly imitated the manner of Boſcan, and ſtill retained the languid expreſſion of old times, which he was not able to conquer, notwithſtanding his frequent communication with the moſt celebrated poets of Italy. Whilſt a ſtu-

dent at the univerſity of Salamanca, he writ that little piece called *the life of Lazarillo de Tormes*, which was ſoon after tranſlated into Italian, and alſo into Engliſh: the great author little thought at that time, that his performance would ever ſerve to grace the ſtalls of Moorfields.—But this *en paſſant*, for he makes a conſiderable figure as an hiſtorian in his *Civil wars of Granada*, wherein he alſo ſpeaks as a contemporary, as his nephew the marquis of Mondejar, was the general, under whoſe command all thoſe great actions were performed. — It is difficult to beſtow praiſes equal to the elegance of this claſſical performance, in which the beauty of ſtyle is ſo great, and the ſentiment every where ſo nobly ſupported,

ported, that he rivals Salluſt and Tacitus; while as a ſoldier he has the correctneſs and temper of Cæſar, and may be ſaid to unite in the higheſt degree the character of a fine gentleman, and an experienced commander.---Many pieces of his, written with much freedom, ſtill remain in manuſcript in private hands, and in the grand duke's library at Florence. His other poems were printed, with the following title, *Obras del inſigne Cavallero Don Diego de Mendoza en Madrid*, 1610.----His fine library he bequeathed to Philip the 2d, and it ſerves as one of the principal ornaments of the eſcurial (*a*).

(*a*) The compiler of the new Spaniſh Parnaſſus, ſpeaking of Don Diego Mendoza, and of his having been ambaſſador in England, acknowledges he can-

Another valiant ſoldier now occurs, who diſtinguiſhed himſelf as a poet, and joined with Don Diego de Mendoza in introducing the metre of Petrarch, and poliſhing the language of his own country. This was Garci-

not diſcover at what time; which makes me think he miſtook him for his brother, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who was ambaſſador in England in queen Elizabeth's time, and on her being informed that he had been concerned in all the cabals that Throcmorton and others had contrived againſt her perſon and ſtate, ſhe cauſed him to be ſharply reprimanded by the council, who commanded him to depart the realm, which he not doing, they ſent him on board captain Hawkins's veſſel, who landed him at Calais, and Sir William Wade was ſent to complain of Mendoza, and juſtify the neceſſity of the ſtep; but Philip was ſo offended, he would not ſee him, and referred him to his council, on which Sir William quitted Spain, ſaying his orders were to addreſs himſelf to the king, and ſince he would not admit him, he had then nothing more to do in the kingdom.==*Wiquefort.*

laſa

laſo de la Vega, born at Toledo in 1503, knight of the order of Alcantara, and ſon of Garcilaſo de la Vega, ambaſſador from the catholic king at the court of Rome, ſon of Hernan Perez de Guzman, a celebrated poet. Garcilaſo diſtinguiſhed himſelf early as a military man in the armies of Charles the fifth, particularly at the ſiege of Tunis, where he was wounded in the face and in the arm. He attended the emperor in Piedmont, having eleven companies of infantry under his command, and was mortally wounded at the ſtorming of a tower near Frejus, being only thirty-three years old, at which the emperor was ſo irritated, that all the peaſants who defended it, were put to the ſword.—Thus fell, in the

prime of life, a gallant ſoldier and an accompliſhed genius, who had greatly improved the poetry of Spain by poliſhing its numbers, and introducing the melody and harmony of the Italian verſification, with which he had been early acquainted, as well as with the principal Italian poets of his time, ſo that he has juſtly been ſtiled *The Prince of Spaniſh poets*, having with his friend Boſcan brought the Spaniſh poetry to its higheſt perfection.—Still the national pride of Don Chriſtoval de Caſtilleja, endeavoured to oppoſe the progreſs of harmony and poetical numbers, and though he was at Vienna as ſecretary to prince Ferdinand, afterwards emperor; he ſtill inveighed againſt his countrymen, particularly in a ſatyrical piece

" againſt

" againſt thoſe who quitted the Spaniſh metre to adopt the Italian!" and in a poem intitled *Petrarquiſtas*, he introduces Juan de Mena, George Manrique, Garci Sanchez, Cartagena, and Torres Naharro, as followers of the Spaniſh metre, in oppoſition to Boſcan, Garcilaſo, Don Luis de Haro, and Don Diego Mendoza, accuſing this laſt of having made uſe of verſe with *leaden feet*.

You will find nevertheleſs in the poets of this age, a ſoftneſs and flueney unknown to their predeceſſors; Hernandez diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his tranſlation of the Æneis of Virgil, and his firſt and fourth eclogue, as alſo the poem of Sannazzar *de partu virginis*. Juan de Guzman likewiſe

likewiſe tranſlated the Georgics of Virgil with the greateſt ſucceſs, which were printed at Salamanca in 1586.

Lope de Rueda, a celebrated actor, now began to give ſome form to the Spaniſh ſtage, being alſo a principal performer of his own compoſitions, which were publiſhed after his death, by Juan Timoneda; he was followed by Bartholome de Torre Naharro, another writer for the ſtage, whoſe comedies and other poems were publiſhed by himſelf, under the whimſical name of *Propaladia*: Juan de la Cueva was the next in ſucceſſion to Naharro, who adorned the dramatic muſe, as Don Alonſo de Ercilla did the epic.

Fernando

Fernando de Herrera, by a ſingular caprice, acquired the ſirname of *Divine* from the fire and energy of his verſe, though he was ſurpaſſed in facility of rhyme by Don Eſtevan Manuel de Villegas, who admirably enriched his own language with all the graces of the Latin ſapphics, Hexameters and Pentameters, uniting the wit of Horace, the graces of Anacreon, the freedom and elegance of Tibullus, with the politenſs of Propertius, and the natural turn of Theocritus. His poems were publiſhed under the title of *Eroticas*. He alſo tranſlated Boetius, in a manner equal to his great reputation.

The perſecuted Father Lewis de Leon may juſtly be ſtiled one of the principal

principal favourites of the muſes in this polite age, imitating Pindar, Horace, Virgil and Tibullus, as well as Petrarch and Bembo.---His elegant verſions of the ſacred writings drew on him an unjuſt and ſevere perſecution from his rivals, and after long and cruel ſufferings in the dark priſons of the inquiſition, he came out with honour and triumph, to the confuſion and diſgrace of his enemies! Next to him we muſt place the two brothers of the name of Argenſola, who equally claim the title of the Horace of Spain, and have not ſince been equalled.

We muſt alſo write with golden letters in the temple of fame, a celebrated ſtateſman, Gonzalo Perez, ſecretary

cretary of ſtate to Philip the ſecond, and father to the unfortunate Antonio Perez, ſecretary to Philip, as his father had been, and whoſe melancholy ſtory is well known: Having had the good fortune to eſcape from Philip, he finiſhed his days in obſcurity, in France, under the protection of Henry the 4th. With the permiſſion of queen Elizabeth, he went, for a little time, to England, and was in correſpondence with Eſſex and other perſons of that time.---But to return to his father Gonzalo, he diſtinguiſhed himſelf as a poet by an elegant tranſlation of the Odyſſey of Homer, in blank verſe, in which attempt he ſtood unrivalled till the Britiſh muſe, jealous of a foreign bard, diſputed with him the honour of excelling

celling in ſo noble a career.----As for Chriſtoval de Meſa, he faintly cloſes the expiring æra, and though a ſcholar of Taſſo, with whom he lived five years in Rome, he remained far behind him, and unequal to epic poetry: ſome of his performances are tolerable, ſuch as the fable of Narciſſus, from Ovid, his imitation of the *Beatus Ille* of Horace, a poetical compendium of the art of poetry, and ſome paſtorals.—After this laſt effort, we muſt now view the Spaniſh muſe like a ſtately tree, arrived at its ultimate period of improvement, and gently bending its head to the all powerful influence of time, gradually declining with the progeny of Philip the 2d, who, after a long reign, expired in the Eſcurial, overwhelmed

ed with diſeaſe, in the moſt excruciating pains and devoured by vermin. The muſes wept, foreſeeing the decline of the Philips, and cloſed the brightneſs of their days with the century! one of the laſt writers who ſupported this tottering fabric, was the Count de Rebolledo, a gentleman of diſtinguiſhed talents and a ſoldier of great intrepidity. He ſerved firſt in the marine department, under Don Pedro de Leyva, and having the command of a galley, gave proofs of the utmoſt bravery againſt the Turks: he afterwards ſerved in Flanders with equal reputation as a colonel of horſe, and was employed as a miniſter to the imperial court on buſineſs of great moment; and Ferdinand the 2d, being at the diet of Ratiſbonne,

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tiſbonne, was ſo pleaſed with his conduct and prudence, though at that time only thirty-ſix years of age, that he conferred on him the dignity of a Count of the ſacred Roman Empire. ----He was afterwards miniſter plenipotentiary in Denmark, after which he returned to Madrid and was of the council of war, and died in his eightieth year, univerſally regretted.----His works were printed at Copenhagen and Antwerp; many of his poems are dedicated to Chriſtina Queen of Sweden; his *Selva Danica* to Sophia Amelia Queen of Denmark, and his *Selva Militar y Politica* to his own ſovereign, Philip the 4th, from whom there are ſixty-eight original letters extant, written to him from 1648 to 61, many of the king's own

own hand, while in Denmark; ſeven from the cardinal Infant Don Ferdinand, and other illuſtrious perſonages.

Many poets however ſupported the ſpirit of the golden age, ſuch as Vicente Eſpinel, Don Luis de Ulloa, Pedro de Eſpinoſa, Don Francifco Quevedo, Don Juan de Jauregui, Solis the hiſtorian and others, who like falling leaves announced the long winter that was to follow. The name of Quevedo is well known to you, and his *viſions* which have been tranſlated into Engliſh; his genius was ſuch that neither the perſecutions he ſuffered from his enemies, or other mortifications, could damp his bold maſculine ſpirit, or the keenneſs of his ſatire; beſides his merit as a poet

he was well verſed in the oriental languages and of great erudition.---His poems appeared under the feigned name of the Bachelor Franciſco de la Torre. When the Duke of Oſſuna was viceroy of Naples, he was employed in ſeveral commiſſions of conſequence amongſt the Italian ſtates, and had the addreſs to go to Venice, on a particular object, diſguiſed as a mendicant. The viceroy ſent him to court, acknowledging his great ſervices, for which he was made a knight of St. James.—When the duke's intereſt and favour declined, he came in for his ſhare of diſgrace, and was three years in confinement, afflicted with illneſs, but nothing appearing againſt him, he was ſet at liberty. Diſguſted with the ficklenefs of court favour,

vour and attendance on the great, he refuſed ſeveral employments that were offered him, as well in the miniſtry, as the embaſſy to Genoa; and retired to his own ſeat, where he gave himſelf up intirely to literary purſuits. At the age of fifty-four, he entered into the ſtate of matrimony, with Dona Eſperanza de Aragon, a lady of rank, whom he ſoon had the misfortune to loſe, finding no other alleviation than ſuch as aroſe from his philoſophical diſpoſition. But the envenomed ſhafts of envy ſtill reached him in his ſolitude; ---- on a falſe accuſation of being author of an infamous libel, he was arreſted in the night, put in cloſe confinement, and his eſtate ſequeſtered. In this ſituation he laboured under various

diſeaſes with acute pain of body and mind; his patrimony ſeized, and himſelf ſupported by charity! under this diſtreſs he wrote that elegant and pathetic letter to the prime miniſter *Olivarez*, which procured him his enlargement: the caſe was enquired into, and the calumny, as well as its author, diſcovered. He once more returned to court to recover his eſtate, which had ſuffered various depredations, but this ungrateful theatre he ſoon abandoned, and retired to his country ſeat, overwhelmed with illneſs, the conſequence of his cruel impriſonment, all which he bore with manly fortitude, and finiſhed his days with exemplary and chriſtian reſignation in the 65th year of his age, in 1645. His perſon was engaging, his complexion

complexion fair, and great expreſſion in his countenance; but from continual ſtudy, his eyes were ſo weakened, that he conſtantly wore ſpectacles.—Such was Quevedo, one of the greateſt ſcholars and eminent poets of his time, whoſe youth was ſpent in the ſervice of his country in Italy, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf with the utmoſt ſagacity and prudence.---To give you an idea of his extenſive knowledge and profound erudition, I own myſelf at a loſs, much leſs to ſpeak of his numerous though excellent writings ----His moral diſcourſes prove his ſound doctrine and religious ſentiments, while his literary pieces diſplay his infinite judgment and refined taſte.---His great knowledge of Hebrew is apparent from the report

of the hiſtorian Mariana to the king, requeſting that Quevedo might reviſe the new edition of the bible of Arias Montanus. His tranſlations of Epictetus and Phocylides, with his imitations of Anacreon and other Greek authors, ſhew how well he was verſed in that language: That he was a Latin ſcholar, his conſtant correſpondence, from the age of twenty, with Lipſius, Chifflet, and Scioppius, will ſufficiently illuſtrate.---As a poet he excelled both in the ſerious and burleſque ſtyle, and was ſingularly happy in that particular turn we have ſince admired in Butler and Swift. His library, which conſiſted of about five thouſand volumes, was reduced, at his death, to about two thouſand, and is preſerved in the convent of St. Martin,

Martin, at Madrid.---Were I to enlarge further, reſpecting this great man, I ſhould eaſily fill a moderate volume.---But it is time to proceed, before we behold the ſetting ſun, and a miſt ariſe over the poetical horizon, which various incidents have obſcured and greatly deprived of its original luſtre.

The *Diana Enamorada* of Gil Polo, an elegant poet in the ſixteenth century, was reprinted in London, in 1739, under the inſpection of Pedro de Pineda.---Jauregui tranſlated Lucan, but not with that ſucceſs as he did the *Aminta* of Taſſo. I cloſe the golden age with the immortal Miguel de Cervantes;---like another Homer, many cities contended for his birth,

and his tranſcendant merit you are well acquainted with. In his poem intitled *A Voyage to Parnaſſus*, he has delineated the characters of the poets of his time ---he equally ſhines as a dramatic writer, but every thing of his is totally eclipſed by his incomparable romance of *Don Quixote*, which, alone crowns his temples with never fading laurels.

Thus ended the golden age of the Spaniſh muſe, whoſe period of glory was ſhort, though the attempt to ſecure its duration ſeemed to promiſe a more laſting reign, if a cloſe imitation of the antients, and the precepts of thoſe great maſters, Ariſtotle and Horace, could have ſecured to them the prize; or ſome inviſible

cauſe

cauſe had not with haſty ſtrides brought on its decline: but before I ſpeak of this laſt period, I tranſmit you an ode of Horace in Spaniſh, Italian, and Engliſh, from whence you may form a comparative judgment of the energy and powers of each language. I have ſubjoined a few ſpecimens of hexameters, ſapphics, adonics, and epigrams, which will give you ſome idea of the harmony of Spaniſh numbers in its moſt improved ſtate.

Adieu!

ODE

ODE XXIII.

Ad Fuſcum Ariſtium.

INTEGER vitæ ſceleriſque purus
Non eget mauri Jaculis, neque arcu
Nec venenatis gravida ſagittis,
Fuſce pharetra.

Sive per ſyrtes iter æſtuoſas,
Sive facturus per inhoſpitalem
Caucaſum, vel quæ loca fabuloſus
Lambit Hydaſpes.

Namque me ſylva lupus in Sabina,
Dum meam canto Lalagen, et ultra
Terminum curis vagor expeditus,
Fugit inermem.

Quale portentum neque militaris
Daunia in latis alit eſculetis:
Nec Jubæ tellus generat, leonum,
Arida nutrix.

Pone me pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æſtiva recreatur aura;
Quod latus mundi nebulæ, maluſque
Jupiter urget.

Pone ſub curru nimium propinqui
Solis, in terra domibus negata:
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem.

In

In SPANISH.

The ſame by Don Antonio de Solis, author of the hiſtory of the conqueſt of Mexico.

NO ha meneſter defenderſe
Con dardos arrojadizos
Quien vive con entereza,
Y camina ſin delito.

Sobrale el arco y la aljaba,
Con el embrion maligno
De venenas ſactas
Que anaden malicia al tiro.

O camine por las ſirtas
Abrafadas del eſtio,
O el Caucaſo inhabitable
Penetre con pie feneillo.

O bien piſe los horrores
De los formidables riſcos,
Que undoſo lame el Hydaſpes
Antes de bafar el Indo.

Que entre los mayores rieſgos
Camina bien defendido
El que va con la innocencia
Que es virtud ſin enemiga.

N. B. *The laſt ſtrophe of Horace ſeems to have been omitted by the Spaniſh poet.*

In

In ITALIAN.

By Dr. Maffei, of Legborn, in his tranſlation of Horace, dedicated to Sir John Dick, Bart. his Majeſty's Conſul at Legborn, and knight of St. Anne of Ruſſia.

CHI e giuſto, e puro
Di diletti ha il petto,
Fuſco non cerca,
Mauri dardi, o l'arco
Ne la faretra
Piena di ſaette
Avvelenate:
O muova i paſſi
Per le ſirti ardenti
O ſia che debba
Valicare il monte
Caucaſo, o i luogi
Dove favuloſo
Scorre l'Idaſpe.
Poiche la mia
Lalage cantando
Mentre minoltro
Nel Sabino boſco,
Scevro di cure

Diſarmato,

In ENGLISH,

By Wentworth Dillon Earl of Roſcommon.

VIRTUE, dear friend! needs no defence,
The ſureſt guard is innocence:
None knew 'till guilt created fear
What darts or poiſoned arrows were.

Integrity undaunted goes
Through Lybian ſands or Scythian ſnows,
Or where Hydaſpes' wealthy ſide
Pays tribute to the Perſian pride.

For as by am'rous thoughts betray'd
Careleſs in Sabin woods I ſtray'd,
A griſly foaming wolf unfed,
Met me unarm'd, yet trembling fled.

No beaſt of more portentous ſize,
In the Hercinian foreſt lies,
None fiercer in Numidia bred,
With Carthage were in triumph led.

Set me in the remoteſt place,
That Neptune's frozen arms embrace,

Where

Disarmato, e solo,
Me fuge un lupo,
Qual la guerriera
Daunia militare
Mostro non nutre
Nelle vaste selve,
Ne la Numidia
Forma di leon
Arida madre
Nei pigri campi,
Dove pianta estiva
Giammai leggiero
Zeffiro recrea
Pommi, cui nebbia,
Ed il procelloso
Giove molesta:
O sotto il carro
Pommi del vicino
Sole, nei luoghi
Vedovi di tetti,
Dolce ridente
Lalage amerò
Dolce parlante.

Where angry Jove did never ſpare
One breath of kind and temp'rate air.

Set me where on ſome pathleſs plain
The ſwarthy Africans complain,
To ſee the chariot of the ſun
So near their ſcorching country run.

The burning zone, the frozen iſles
Shall hear me ſing of Celia's ſmiles:
All cold, but in her breaſt I will deſpiſe;
And dare all heat! but that in Celia's eyes.

SPECIMEN

SPECIMEN of HEXAMETERS.

By Don Eſtevan Manuel de Villegas.

EGLOGA.

LICIDAS Coridon, y Coridon el amante de Filis,
Paſtor el uno de cabras, el otro de blancas ovejas,
Ambos a dos tiernos, mozos ambos, arcades ambos,
Viendo que los rayos del ſol fatigaban al orbe,
Y que vibrando fuego feroz la canicula ladra,
Al puro criſtal, que cria la fuente ſonora,
Llevedos del ſon alegre de ſu blando ſuſurro,
Las plantas veloces mueven, los paſos animan,
Y al tronco de un verde enebro ſe ſientan amigos.

SAPPHICS.

By the ſame hand.

DULCE vecino de la verde ſelva,
Hueſped eterno del abril florido,
Vital aliento de la madre Venus,
Zephiro blando.

Si de mis anſias el amor ſupiſte;
Tu, que las quejas de mi voz llevaſte,
Oye: no temas, y a mi ninfa dile,
Dile, que muero.

Filis un tiempo mi dolor ſabia,
Filis un tiempo mi dolor lloraba,
Quiſome un tiempo; mas agora temo,
Temo ſus iras.

Aſi los dioſés con amor paterno,
Aſi los cielos con amor benigno,
Nieguen al tiempo, que feliz volares,
Nieve a la tierra.

Jamás el peſo de la nube parda,
Quando amanece la elevada cumbre,
Torque tus hombros, ni ſu mal granizo.
Hiera tus alas.

ADONICS.

By Geronimo Bermudez.

O! Corazones
Mas que de tigres!
O! manos crúdas
Mas que de fieras,
Como pudiſtes
Tan innocente,
Tan apurada
O Sangre

Sangre verter!
Ay! que ſu grito,
O Luſitania,
Patria mia,
Ay que ſu grito
Deſde la tierra
Rompe los cielos,
Rompe las nnbes,
Rompe los ayres,
Trae las llamas
Del zelo vivo,
Trae los rayos
Del vivo fuego
Que purifica
Toda la tierra
Contaminada
De la crueza
Que cometiſte!
Trae la vara,
Trae el azote,
Trae la peſte,
Trae la furia
Que te caſtiga
Sin piedad.
Etc. . . . . .

ANACREONTIC ODE,

By Don Eſtevan Manuel de Villegas.

YO vi ſobre un tomillo
Quexarſe un paxarillo
Viendo ſu nido amado,
De quien era caudillo,
De un labrador robado.
Vile tan congojado
Por tal atrevimiento
Dar mil quexas al viento;
Para que al cielo ſanto
Lleve ſu tierno llanto,
Lleve ſu triſte acento.
Ya con triſte harmonia,
Es forzando el intento,
Mil quexus repetia:
Ya canſado callaba:
Y al nuevo ſentimiento
Ya ſonoro volvia.
Ya circular volaba:
Ya raſtrero corria:
Ya, pues, de rama en rama

Al ruſtico ſeguia;
Y ſaltando en la grama,
Parece que decia:
Dame, ruſtico fiero,
Mi dulce compania:
Y que le reſpondia
El ruſtico: *no quiero.*

PINDARIC ODE,

By Father Lewis de Leon.

EL agua es bien precioſo,
Y entre el rico teſoro,
Como el ardiente fuego en noche eſcura
Anſi relumbra el oro.
Mas, alma ſi es ſabroſo
Cantar de las contiendas la ventura,
Anſi como en la altura
No hay rayo mas luciente,
Que el ſol, que rey del dia
Por todo el yermo cielo ſe demueſtra;
Anſi es mas excelente
La olimpica porfia.
De todas las que canta la voz nueſtra
Materia abundante,
Donde todo elegante

Ingenio

Ingenio alza la voz, ora cantando
De Rea, y de Saturno el engendrado,
Y Juntamente entrando
Al techo de Hieron alto preciado.
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

CANCION.

By Garcilaſo de la Vega, dedicated to Violante Sanſeverino, daughter to the Duke de Soma, in Naples.

SI de mi baja lira
Tanto pudieſe el ſon, que un momento
Aplicaſe la ira
Del animoſo vento,
Y la furia del mar, y el movimiento;
Y en aſperas montanas,
Con el ſuave canto enternecieſe
Las fieras animales,
Los arboles moviеſe,
Y al ſon confuſamente los truxeſe:
No pienſes que cantando
Seria de mi, hermoſa flor de gnido,
El fiero Marte ayrado,
A muerte convertido,
De polvo, y ſangre, y de ſudor tenido:

Ni aquellos capitanes,
En la ſublime rueda colocados,
Por quien los alemanes
El fiero cuello atados,
Y los franceſes van domeſticados.

EPIGRAM.

By Baltazar del Alcazar.

MAGDALENA me picó
Con un alfiler un dedo:
Dije la: picado quedo,
Pero ya lo eſtaba yo.
Rioſe, y con ſu cordura
Acudió al remedio preſto:
Chupóme el dedo, y con eſto
Sané de la picadura.

EPIGRAM.

By Lope de Vega on Charles Prince of Wales, when he went to Madrid to court the Infanta of Spain.

CARLOS Stuardo ſoy
Que ſiendo *Amor*, mi guia
Al cielo de Eſpanà voy
Por ver mi eſtrella *Maria!*

LETTER XII.

Fourth period and decline of Spaniſh Poetry in the ſeventeenth century.

ST. ILDEFONSO, 26th JULY, 1778.

LIKE another Don Quixote, I ſallied forth from Madrid, on one of the hotteſt days in July, and having traverſed a bleak country and climbed ſteep and almoſt perpendicular mountains, I at laſt reached, with a good deal of labour, the royal ſeat of St. Ildefonſo, in a wild and barren ſituation, where, for the ſake of the cool air that conſtantly reigns here, Philip the 5th thought fit to diſplay his magnificence, by converting one of the moſt barren

ſpots in nature into a royal villa, where the laviſh expence of Verſailles was to be renewed, and the French taſte of gardening exhibited, with the formal lines of ſtiff deſign and antiquated ſymetry. Nature, it is true, aſſiſted them with the moſt clear and limpid water, which they have made uſe of to advantage; ſhade being here an object of principal luxury, the gardens have the appearance of a perfect paradiſe, on leaving the ſultry air of Madrid. But notwithſtanding this contraſt, it is here ſo piercing at night, and its tranſitions ſo ſudden as to be often productive of dangerous effects on the conſtitution; for while you paſs the day agreeably, dreſſed in ſilk, a Ruſſian fur is acceptable at night.

Though

Though every effort is made in theſe gardens, in the midſt of ſnowy mountains, to ſupport vegetation, and force a ſmile on nature, yet every thing looks languid; and inſtead of the blooming aſpect of ſummer, it rather puts me in mind of the ſubject I propoſed continuing in my laſt letter, when having traced the Spaniſh muſe in the bright days of ſplendour, I come now to deſcant upon her withered bays, like the puny products of St. Ildefonſo, that have the colour and reſemblance of youth, but nothing of its juvenile vigour and ſtrength.—Thus it happened to the Spaniſh muſe in the ſeventeenth century, to which the falſe taſte that had already crept in amongſt the Italians contributed not

a little,

a little, and ſerved to haſten their decline; even the Tuſcan muſe, after ſoaring to the higheſt pinnacle of glory, inſenſibly began to loſe her priſtine comelineſs under the tuition of Marini and his pupils, who by a ſtrain of falſe ſimilies and extravagant conceits, ſtripped the muſes of their natural graces. The Spaniards ſoon catched the contagion in the feeble condition they were in, and Lorenzo Gracian, ſome of whoſe works have been tranſlated into Engliſh, further eſtabliſhed this falſe taſte, which he attempted to methodize in a formal eſſay, entitled *de Agudeza y arte de Ingenio*; by which means the pleaſing elegance of nature was diſfigured by a combination of pedants, who loſing ſight of every beautiful idea, contemning

temning at the ſame time the rules of art, made way for their inſipid vagaries.---Theſe unmerciful deſpoilers may be claſſed under three heads in Spain; the firſt violated all the laws of the drama, and introduced innumerable defects on the ſtage, which have never been eradicated: of theſe, Chriſtoval de Virues, Lope de Vega, and Montalban, were the principal leaders, and were followed by Calderon, Salazar, Candamo, Zamora, and others, who to the moſt glaring improprieties, ſuperadded a ridiculous bombaſt and affectation of language, which became ſuperlatively intolerable and abſurd.----The ſecond claſs conſiſted of thoſe who in imitation of the Italians and their unnatural *Concetti*, introduced ſuch an extravagant profuſion

profuſion of falſe ſentiment, equivocal expreſſion, and ſwollen periods, as recalled to mind thoſe ancient times, when ſuch men had been ſo ſeverely handled by Horace; and not content with doing ſo much injury to the drama, they further extended it to lyric compoſitions.---The third claſs was diſtinguiſhed by the pedantic appellation of *Cultos*, "or refined," which comprehended a ſet of puritans, who out of falſe zeal for the chaſtity of the muſes, endeavoured to introduce a greater purity of diction, but by their awkward and ignorant preſumption, ſubſtituted obſcure and unknown expreſſions to a new and turgid dialect. At the head of theſe was the poet Luis de Gongora, the count de Villamediana,

diana, with others of leſs note, who contributed to diffuſe an univerſal bad taſte, and diſcredit the muſes, ſapping the very foundations of their temple, and pointing their ſhafts againſt the few remnants of beauty and eloquence in every branch of literature: to ſuch a low ſtate was true genius reduced by theſe vandals, that the greateſt applauſes were given to vile punſters and minſtrels, and every retailer of falſe wit, under the denomination of *Diſcreciones*, who in a former age would have been hiſſed off the ſtage with the moſt ſovereign contempt.

While an univerſal langour thus pervaded every mind, the royal ſtem partook of a ſimilar decline of nature.

ture. The progeny of the great emperor Charles now drew near to its laſt gaſp! whatever may have been the cauſe, the muſes gradually drooped with the empire of theſe monarchs, and in conjunction with the diſmembered dominions of the Philips, expired under the feeble Charles the ſecond, who leaving no iſſue, a prince of the houſe of Bourbon aſcended the throne of Spain.--- The national dreſs of the Spaniard, as well as his character, were altered; his ſable garment was changed for the gay and effeminate modes of Verſailles; Spaniſh gravity was put out of countenance, and he was deprived of his darling whiſkers, as the ſavage Ruſſians much about the ſame time

time had been deſpoiled of their beards (*a*).---Perhaps you are unacquainted with the importance of whiſkers at that time in Spain and Portugal: It is told of Don Joam de

(*a*) When the emperor Charles's german ſoldiers quarrelled with their Spaniſh comrades, they uſed to ſwear in german *By Got*, laying hold of their whiſkers; from whence the Spaniards miſtaking the meaning of the word, have called whiſkers ever ſince by the name of *Bigotes*, though the original word is *Moſtacho*, from the Greek word μυσταξ *the upper lip*.---Whiſkers and beards were points of great conſequence in Spain in thoſe days and any inſult offered to them was not to be borne with, even after death by the *Cid*, as the grave Cobarruvias tells us, *It was ſaid*, that a Jew having pulled him by the beard on his tomb, out of contempt, God permitted that the figure of this champion ſhould extend its marble hand to its ſword, and draw it one third out of the ſcabbard; on which the affrighted Jew ſcreamed out, which brought people together, who related the ſtory, and ſome *ſaid* it cauſed the Jew to become a Chriſtian!

Caſtro,

Caſtro, a Portugueze viceroy in India, that being in great want of money, and deſirous to borrow a large ſum in that country, he pawned one of his whiſkers, as the moſt ſacred pledge he could think of; which he afterwards honourably redeemed: in which he acted with more punctilio than that famous Spaniſh hero the *Cid*, who obtaining a ſum of money of a jew on his plate, inſtead of ſending it to his houſe, ordered only a cheſt of ſand;—though he afterwards made reſtitution in his will.

Adieu.---My next will be from the Eſcurial, where I am going to ſpend a few days, and then prepare matters for my departure for England.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Remarks made in the library of the Eſcurial, on Spaniſh commentators, poetical tranſlations of greek and latin claſſics, and italian authors.

ESCURIAL, AUGUST 2d, 1778.

I HAVE taken this opportunity to come to the Eſcurial in order to view this grand edifice more at leiſure, when the court is not here, and to indulge a few hours ſtudy and reſearch in this very curious library, of which you have already heard ſo much, as well as of the famous building of the Eſcurial, the great work of the gloomy Philip the ſecond, which coſt him ſix millions of ducats. His long reign furniſhed him more-

over the pleaſure of ſeeing it perfect-ed, with the additional ſatisfaction of the whole having been compleated under the direction of two Spaniſh architects, John Baptiſt de Toledo, and his pupil Juan de Herrera; a ſtructure of which you have of late ſeen ſo many accurate accounts, that it leaves me little to add on the ſubject, more than to inform you, that, as to the exaggeration of this building having eleven thouſand windows, fourteen thouſand doors, and eight hundred pillars, it is denied by their own writers, as well as what has been ſaid of the tabernacle on the great altar being of porphyry, with eighteen pillars of agate, and being fourteen years making; alſo that the ceiling of the choir was painted by Titian:

Titian: that the glaſs windows were fixed in frames of ſilver gilt, and that the library contained an hundred thouſand volumes; all which are fabulous inventions, introduced by novel writers and book-makers, to amuſe the credulous public in foreign countries.

The library may contain about thirty thouſand volumes, and may undoubtedly be eſteemed as a very curious and valuable collection: I ſpent a conſiderable time there with great delight. It would be an herculean labour to attempt giving a ſeries of the numerous collections of Spaniſh poets, commentators and tranſlators, from the Greek, Latin and Italian poets, I mean to confine my-

ſelf only to poetical books. The moſt antient collection of poems is that made by Baena in the reign of John the 2d, mentioned before; which is in manuſcript in this library, and continued by Hernando del Caſtillo.---Lorenzo de Ayala publiſhed at Valencia, in 1588, another collection, entitled *Jardin de amadores*, "The garden of lovers;" to which may be added the *Romancero general* of Miguel de Madrigal, in 1604, that of Flores in Madrid in 1614, and the firſt part of the *Teſoro de Divina poeſia* from various writers. Pedro de Eſpinoſa compiled the firſt part of the *flores de poetas iluſtres de Eſpana*, printed at Valladolid in 1605, wherein the compiler alſo makes a conſpicuous figure.

It was the misfortune of letters, at that time in Spain, to be loaded with commentators, who equally preſſed good and bad authors into the ſervice, and burthened them with the weight of their dulneſs; thoſe who had not the temerity to attempt the Greek and Latin claſſics, becauſe they did not underſtand them, fell without mercy on the works of their countrymen, and ſome would comment upon their own works, which gave birth to the moſt monſtrous productions. Even the learned Marquiſs de Santillana commented upon his own *Proverbios*; the poets Juan de Mena and Garcilaſo de la Vega had numerous commentators; and the obſcure Gongora had three ſuch writers, who were ſo unſucceſsful that

they require another commentator for themſelves.

The tranſlations of poets in the Spaniſh language are numerous, taken from Greek and Latin authors, as well as from the Provenzal, Italian, Portugueze, and latterly from the French. Gonzalo Perez tranſlated the odyſſey of Homer, and Chriſtoval de Meſa the iliad, which laſt is ſtill in manuſcript. The medea of Euripides was tranſlated by Pedro Simon Abril in Barcelona, in 1599. Boſcan tranſlated from the Greek poet Muſeus, as Lewis de Leon did from Pindar, and Villegas from Theocritus. Of Virgil there are ſeveral tranſlations beſides that of the Marquiſs of Villena. Juan de la Encina tranſlated

ted the eclogues in 1516, at Saragoſſa, Juan de Guzman, a ſcholar of the famous Sanctius Brocenſis, that is, Sanchez of Brozas in Eſtremadura, tranſlated the Georgics in blank verſe at Salamanca in 1586. Chriſtoval de Meſa tranſlated the æneis in octave rhymes in 1615, but that by Luis de Leon, publiſhed by Quevedo at Madrid in 1631, is far ſuperior, and may be conſidered as an excellent performance.

The art of poetry of Horace has been excellently tranſlated by Eſpinel as well as by Luis de Zapata, printed in Spaniſh verſe at Liſbon in 1592.

Ovid's metamorphoſes have been tranſlated into Spaniſh by ſeve-

ral hands, particularly by Philip Mey at Tarragona in 1586, with great ſucceſs, which ſhews the taſte of Don Antonio Aguſtin archbiſhop of Tarragona, who kept Mey in his palace as a printer, whom he employed in his own valuable and learned works. This great prelate notwithſtanding his ſerious occupations had a favourable opinion of the muſes: He began a poem in praiſe of the fountain of *Alcover*, which he had obſerved in a viſitation of his dioceſe, and directed Mey to finiſh it. —— The epiſtles of Ovid were tranſlated in blank verſe by Don Franciſco de Aldana a captain in the army under Philip II. but when the author's brother Coſmo printed his other poems at Madrid in 1591, this work was ſo ſcarce that

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he was obliged to omit it. Many other tranſlations from the greek and latin claſſics are to be found, and I have this moment received a new book on that ſubject from Madrid, by Don Juan Antonio Pellicer of the king's library, who has juſt publiſhed an introductory eſſay, to a future work, which is to comprehend all the learned Spaniards who have tranſlated the fathers, philoſophers, greek and latin hiſtorians and poets (*a*).

The italian poets were introduced at an early period into Spain. It is

(*a*) Enſayo de una bibliotheca de Traductores Eſpanoles donde ſe da noticia de las traducciones que hay en Caſtillano de la Sagrada Eſcritura, Santos Padres, filoſophos, hiſtoriadores medicos, oradores, poetas, aſi grieges como latinos; y de otros autores que han florecido antes de la invencion de la imprenta por Don Juan Antonio Pellicer y Saforcada, &c. Madrid, 1778.

ſomewhat

ſomewhat remarkable that all their great geniuſſes owed their improvement to the Italian ſchool. It was there that Mendoza, Boſcan, Garcilaſo de la Vega, Quevedo, Ercilla, and many others formed their taſte, and when the Spaniards loſt their dominions in Italy at the death of Charles II. it ſeems to have been the principal cauſe of the decline of literature amongſt them.

The learned Marquiſs of Villena had at a very early period given a tranſlation of Dante at the deſire of the Marquiſs of Santillana, and the ſame poet was afterwards tranſlated in verſe with notes by Don Pedro Fernandes de Villegas arcdeacon of Burgos,

gos, and printed in that city in 1515, at the end of which the 10th ſatire of Juvenal is added by the author's brother Geronimo de Villegas prior of Cuevas Rubias.— The *Triomfi* of Petrarch was turned into Spaniſh verſe and publiſhed at Medina del campo in 1554. The *Orlando furioſo* of Arioſto was tranſlated at Toledo in 1510 and again by Don Geronimo de Urrea, printed at Lyons in 1556. *The Tears of St. Peter* by Tanſillo, an Italian poet of the twelfth century, has been twice given in Spaniſh, firſt by Lewis Galvet de Montalvo, at Toledo, in 1587, and then by Don Juan de Sedeno. Tanſillo having written a licentious poem in his youth, it was ſuppreſſed at Rome, and inſerted in the *Index* of prohibited books,

books, which affected him so much, that it occasioned this elegant poem of the *Tears of St. Peter*, which the famous Malherbe has also translated into French. Tansillo has been sometimes compared to Petrarch. The *Gierusalemme Liberata* of Tasso has been translated into Spanish by Juan de Sedeno at Madrid, in 1587. —There are two translations of the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini, the first by Suarez de Figueroa, of Valencia, in 1609, the second by the fair hand of a Lady, Dona Isabela de Correa, and printed at Antwerp in 1694. But to return to Tasso, Faria a Portugueze writer proves in his life of Camoens, that the poem of the Lusiad is prior to Tasso, as the Lusiad was published in 1572, and the first edition

edition of the *Gieruſalemme Liberata* appeared imperfect in 1581, and compleat at Venice in 1582, which is nine years later than the Luſiad; from whence it is evident the Portugueze had a correct epic poem before the Italians. Faria even goes further, and endeavours to ſhew that Taſſo has borrowed ſome of his moſt beautiful paſſages from the Luſitanian bard: it is moreover ſingular, that while Voltaire endeavours to depreciate the Luſiad with the ſeeming jealouſy of a rival, he extols ſome paſſages of the *Araucana*, a Spaniſh poem by Don Alonſo de Ercilla, wherein the French poet compares the ſpeech of the Indian chief *Colocòlo* to his people, with that of Neſtor to Achilles and Agamemnon in the

firſt

firſt book of the Iliad, and gives the ſuperiority to the Spaniard over Homer. You will of courſe be curious to hear ſomething further of ſuch a diſtinguiſhed writer. Don Alonſo de Ercilla, a gentleman of Biſcay, was a knight of the order of St. James, and gentleman of the bedchamber to the emperor Rodolph the 2d. He was brought up at court from his youth, having been page to the emperor Charles and Philip his ſon, whom he attended in all his expeditions to Italy, Flanders, Germany, and England. Being in London, when he heard that a rebellion had broken out in the town of *Arauco* in South America, he immediately quitted England and embarked for America, as a volunteer in the

P III

the cauſe of his country, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf with extraordinary valour againſt the Indians, writing by night the actions he had been witneſs of by day, and for want of other conveniencies, compoſing his poem on ſcraps of paper, or pieces of leather, taking up alternately the ſword or the pen;---after many acts of heroiſm, he had the good fortune to return to the court of his maſter, and produce a beautiful poem which was perfected at the age of twenty-nine; the firſt part of which was printed in 1577, ſo that he holds a diſtinguiſhed rank amongſt the poets of the golden age, though I had not mentioned him before; as does alſo Don Franciſco de Borja prince of Equilache, knight of

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the golden fleece, and viceroy of Peru till the death of Philip the 3d, in 1621, on receiving news of which, he embarked for Spain, and retired to Valencia, his native country, tho' he went again to the court of Madrid, where he died in his 80th year. In his leiſure hours, he principally devoted himſelf to the muſes, and chiefly excelled in lyric compoſitions, inſomuch that he has been claſſed amongſt the nine muſes of Spain, which, with himſelf conſiſted of Garcilaſo de la Vega, Villegas, Quevedo, the count de Rebolledo, the two Argenſolas, Lewis de Leon, and Lope de Vega.

I ſay nothing to you of the fine collection of Arabic manuſcripts, in the

the library of the Eſcurial, many of which are curiouſly painted and emblazoned: Were I to ſpeak to you of a ſiſter art, or had I the muſical talents of a Burney, I might give you a further deſcription of a curious book in this collection, being a treatiſe upon muſic, with deſigns of upwards of thirty different muſical inſtruments, which would give infinite pleaſure to the lovers of that fine art, if there were any means of obtaining a copy of them, in order to acquire a more perfect knowledge of the ſtate of muſic in this country under the dominion of the Arabs. The authors name is *Abbi Naſſar Ben Mahommed Alpharaibi*, with the following title, as tranſlated by Caſiri, the

king's librarian, in his account of theſe manuſcripts:

N°. CMVI.

Abbi Naſſar Ben Mahommed Alpharabi,
MUSICES ELEMENTA,
Adjectis notis muſicis et inſtrumentorum figuris plus triginta, &c.

After a long converſation in this library with an ingenious friend, who is a paſſionate admirer of Cervantes, we were going away highly pleaſed, when the librarian who attended us with much courteſy and good manners, recalled our attention to a ſmall cheſt of antient coins, which he acknowledged to have no extraordinary merit; but they had a very ſingular one in my eyes, as I diſcovered them to have belonged to the great archbiſhop of Tarragona, Don

Don Antonio Aguſtin, (whoſe curious library is alſo here) and to have been the original coins which ſerved him to draw up thoſe learned dialogues on medals, ſo univerſally admired in all countries, and which have been tranſlated into italian and latin.—I was pleaſed to ſee there, a coin of the iſland of Rhodes, with the head of the famous Coloſſus, and the name of the city ſtamped on it, POAION, which the archbiſhop tells us, in dialogue the ſecond, they ſhewed him at Rome in the church of *Santa Croce di Gieruſalemme*, as one of the thirty pieces of money with which Judas betrayed our Saviour; but this had little effect on the learned prelate, who ſtates the improbability thereof, and that Judas was more likely to have been paid

with *Sicles*, or other coin of the country, as he was rewarded out of the money belonging to the public treaſury. The obſervation that follows I ſhall give you in the archbiſhop's own words: "B. Why then do they hold this coin as a relic in Rome? A. For the ſame reaſon they have at the convent of Poblet *(in Catalonia)* for ſhewing a large dice four times as large as the common ones, and of a jaſper colour, which they ſay is one of thoſe, with which the ſoldiers played for the garments of our Lord; all theſe kind of things are very uncertain, and do not deſerve ſo good a name as relics, ſince they were uſed as inſtruments of ſin."--But I am again falling into digreſſions; indulge

indulge me with one reflection more before I quit this deſultory letter; and that is, that after reviewing ſuch a variety of commentators which the Spaniſh language affords, I lament that the great Cervantes is no longer underſtood by his countrymen, and that this claſſic writer, ſo well acquainted with the inmoſt receſſes of the human heart, and who abounds with the moſt beautiful allegories, yet remains without a ſingle commentator!—Let me exhort you then to continue your attention to this great author, in whom nature herſelf ſpeaks her own language, and I hope when I have the pleaſure of ſeeing you again, I may without being a miniſter of ſtate, or yourſelf a ſuitor for

court favour, make you the ſame compliment which the earl of Oxford did to Rowe the poet, and give you joy that you can read Don Quixote in the original.

LETTER XIV.

Revolutions and progreſs of the Spaniſh Drama.

MADRID, AUGUST 6th, 1778.

IN the preſent critical moment, it is impoſſible for an Engliſhman to be lukewarm, who has a true love for his country.—Though our enemies were ever ſo numerous, we ſurely are equal to dangers, let them be ever ſo great.---A thouſand duties call me home, I long to be with you, and to take a more active part in this noble ſtruggle; you have my beſt wiſhes, that ſuch vigorous exertions may be crowned with ſucceſs; I cannot ſubmit to the idea of yielding even the length of a wave on our natural

element: Oh faireſt iſland! may thy dominion ever be acknowledged, and thy ſpirit of freedom, commerce and happineſs, be revered and admired till time ſhall be no more! ----In this penſive ſtrain I ſaunter through the ſtreets of Madrid, take my evening's walk in the *Prado*, and then return home, and prepare matters for my departure from hence: but I have hitherto ſaid nothing to you of the theatre, and you will of courſe expect ſomething on that ſubject. If you will give me leave, I will take up the ſubject from a very early date, ſince I have ſeen the ſtately remains of an ancient Roman theatre at Morviedro, near Valencia, which ſhews that theſe entertainments were known in Spain under the Romans,

mans, though we cannot aſcertain at what period. If you believe the report of Philoſtratus, in his life of Apollonius Tyanæus, the inhabitants of Bœtica had never ſeen any theatrical entertainments, and when a few indigent ſtrollers firſt appeared amongſt them, they gazed with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment at their awkward geſtures; the citizens of *Ipula* in particular were ſo aſtoniſhed at a tragedy performed by theſe actors, that the audience ſtood aghaſt, and conſidered them as ſo many fiends, from whom they fled with the utmoſt precipitancy; all which is ſuppoſed to have happened under the reign of Nero. Be this as it may, moſt probably they totally ceaſed under the ravaging hand of the goth: at laſt the

the Trobadours revived the Roman ſpirit, which extended itſelf to the kingdom of Aragon, with the dramatic muſe in the days of the marquis of Villena, and at its union to Caſtile, began to dawn in this latter kingdom.

The *Cancionero* of the poet Juan de la Encina, contains many dramatic pieces of his, acted during Chriſtmas, Shrovetide, and Eaſter, in the houſe of the Duke of Alva. Theſe entertainments not only conſiſted of paſtoral dialogues, and ſubjects of love, but were moreover adapted to the ſacred page, and repreſented the paſſion of our ſaviour and other parts of ſcripture, but ſuch pieces could give but a feeble idea of the powers of the drama; as to their

other

other performances, the actors were moſtly diſſolute men, incapable, from the depravity of their manners to feel the delicate ſentiments of the Greek or Roman muſe, or thoſe noble paſſions which inflame a generous mind; much leſs to repreſent their effects: ſo that the compoſitions of the times were ſuitable to the turn of the actors, and reſtricted to ſcenes of low life, ſimilar to thoſe manners which conſtituted their principal characters. Theſe gave origin to that noted one of the *Celeſtina*, in the tragi-comedy of *Calixto* and *Melibea*, tranſlated long ſince into Engliſh, under the title of *The Spaniſh rogue*, a piece totally unworthy of the ſtage, in which vice is depicted in ſuch lively colours and immorality ſo openly exhibited, as

to

to excite our utmoſt indignation. Its author is unknown, though from its claſſic language ſome have attributed it to Juan de Mena, others to Roderic de Cota. The original piece had only one act, and was afterwards compleated by Fernando de Rocas. It was firſt written in proſe, then turned into verſe by Juan de Sedeno at Salamanca, in 1540. It has been twice tranſlated into French, firſt by an anonymous hand at Lyons in 1529, and reprinted at Paris in 1542, where it was again tranſlated by Thomas Laverdin in 1598. The ſame diſſolute temper infected the Portugueze drama; the comedies of George Ferreira Vaſconcellos, after they were printed at Evora in 1566, were immediately ſuppreſſed; in other reſpects

ſpects he united the comic powers of Plautus and Terence; they were tranſlated into Spaniſh at Madrid in 1631, by Don Fernando Balleſtros y Saavedro, and have been again reprinted here in 1735, by Don Blas Naſſarre, under the feigned name of Don Domingo Ferruno Quexilloſo.—While the Spaniſh drama laboured under all theſe diſadvantages, a new Roſcius aroſe in the perſon of Lope de Rueda of Seville, whoſe pieces do honour to his memory, as well as his theatrical abilities as a performer; he was a gold-beater by trade, and it is praiſe ſufficient for him that Cervantes, who was his contemporary, has ſpoken highly in his favour, adding that none had equalled him as an actor, or in the natural turn of

his

his dialogue and juſtneſs of character. His prologues and interludes are diſtinguiſhed by the name of *paſſos*, which ſhews the antiquity of thoſe compoſitions known at preſent by the names of *Loas*, *Entremeſes* and *Sainetes*.—Alonſo de la Vega ſucceeded Rueda as a writer and a performer, but is much inferior to him as a writer. His *Tholomea* conſiſts of eight ſcenes, but his *Duqueſa de la Roſa* is not divided into ſcenes or acts, and forms one continued ſeries.

The ſtage in thoſe days made a very mean and inconſiderable figure; Cervantes informs us, that in the time of Lope de Rueda all the apparatus of a theatre might be wrapped up in a bag, being nothing more than

than four gilt leather ſkins, as many falſe beards and heads of hair, with three or four ſlaves. Comedies were then nothing more than paſtoral dialogues between ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes, with interludes, in which the ribaldry of a negro, the boaſts of a coward, and the blunders of a Biſcayner, like the bulls of our *Teague*, form the principal part, and we owe to them our *Bobadil*, a name nevertheleſs of great renown in Spain, as *Falſtaff* certainly was in England, till it fell under the diſpleaſure of Shakeſpeare. Lope de Rueda was admirable in all theſe characters, and doubtleſs would have made an excellent *Abel Drugger*, though inferior in other reſpects to the great Roſcius with us. In thoſe days there were no changes of ſcenes, no battles

battles with horſe and foot between chriſtians and moors, no paſſages for the actors in the centre of the ſtage, the whole of which conſiſted of a few boards laid over benches, no machinery of any kind, an old curtain drawn acroſs, divided the part where the actors were to dreſs, and where the muſicians ſung without the aſſiſtance of inſtruments.—Lope de Rueda died at Cordova, and in conſideration of his great merit was interred in the cathedral between the two choirs near the famous jeſter Luis Lopez. As an actor he had a ſucceſſor in Naharro of Toledo, who imitated Rueda in the low comic. The bag was replaced by trunks to hold the additional furniture, he placed the muſicians before the ſtage, aboliſhed the general

general uſe of falſe beards, reſerving them for their true characters; he introduced battles, clouds, thunder, lightning, ſtorms, and ſhipwreck. As a writer, Rueda was followed by Chriſtoval de Caſtillejo, and were it not for want of decency, his pieces would be excellent, particularly the *Conſtanza*, which is in manuſcript in the Eſcurial. After this a more polite genius, Juan de la Cueva, of Seville, improved the Spaniſh ſtage, and greatly refined the language of the drama, by his ſoft and melodious numbers. His theatrical pieces were acted at Seville in 1579, and printed there in 1588.——I come now to ſpeak of the great author of Don Quixote as a play-writer.——The

titles of his plays are *La Gran Turquesca*, *La Batalla Naval*, *La Jeruſalem*, *La Amaranta o Mayo*, *El Boſque Amoroſo*, *La Arſinda*, and *La Confuſa*, printed at Madrid in 1615, and reprinted in 1740. He was the firſt who divided the drama into three *Jornadas*, or acts, and was a ſtrenuous aſſertor of the true taſte of the ancients; on which account he attacked Lope de Vega with all his might, but the popular applauſe was too great in favour of his antagoniſt, who ingratiated himſelf ſo much with the people by indulging their verſatile humour, added to his exuberance of fancy, and the juſtneſs of his characters, that he carried all before him, like an impetuous torrent breaking down all the barriers of oppoſition:

by

by which means, as another Shakeſpear, Lope de Vega acquired univerſal admiration. The fecundity of his genius was ſo great, and his productions ſo rapid, that he did not give leiſure to the public to diſtinguiſh the efforts of genius from the wild ſallies of intemperate fancy; nor could the ſeveral attacks of Cervantes, Villegas, Chriſtoval de Meſa, and others, prevail againſt this favourite bard.----His ſucceſſors copied his defects without poſſeſſing his beauties; Calderon, who came after him, gave the finiſhing hand to the fatal plan of Lope, and with the ſame advantages of language and wit, perverted the minds of the people. His ſcenes are repeated triumphs of vice, in which the fair ſex are taught to

ſacrifice every thing to the impreſſions of love, to deſpiſe the advice of tender parents, and yield to the inſidious arts of ſeducers. He gives every encouragement to licentiouſneſs and revel, and his wit was the more dangerous from being delivered with the moſt beautiful expreſſion; his plots are well laid and ingeniouſly ſupported, all which in ſuch able hands might have been applied to the moſt laudable purpoſes; though ſome of his plays have been more correct and eſcaped the general cenſure. Solis is not inferior to Calderon in elegance and ſtyle, particularly in *La Gitanilla de Madrid*, *El Alcazar del Secreto*, and *Un Bobo haze ciento*. Some of Moreto's comedies are not without merit, ſuch as *El deſden con el deſden*,

to

to which may be added, *El Hechizado por fuerza*, written by Zamora, alſo his *Caſtigo de la miſeria*, and ſome others, that do honour to his memory.

With reſpect to tragedy, they date it from the end of the 15th century, or beginning of the 16th, when Vaſco Diaz Tanco de Fregenal produced three tragedies that never were printed, wherein they may diſpute the palm with the italians, who have none of an earlier date than the *Sophiniſba* of Treſſino, and another on the ſame ſubject in 1502, by Galeoto, marquiſs of Carreto. To theſe may be added, the tragedies of Hernan Perez de Oliva, printed in 1586, *La Vengenza de Agamemnon* and *La Hecuba Triſte*, compoſed on the model of the

greeks. The two tragedies of *Niſe Laſtimoſa* and *Niſe Laureada*, by Bermudez, publiſhed in 1577, have not only great variety of verſification and harmony of numbers, but infinite merit in their compoſitions; the ſame may be ſaid of the tragedies of Juan de la Cueva; as for thoſe of Gabriel Laſſo, they fall much ſhort of the former, either in language or invention. Cervantes praiſes thoſe of *La Iſabela*, *La Filis* and *La Alexandra*, which were written by Lupercio de Argenſola.

In 1609 five tragedies of Chriſtoval de Virues were printed, which had but a middling reputation, no more than that of the *Pompeyo* of Chriſtoval de Meſa in 1618: as to

Lope de Vega, I reſerve myſelf to ſpeak to you more fully concerning him in my next letter.----Little can be ſaid in favour of the tragedy of *Dona Ines de Caſtro*, by Mexia de la Cerda, or *Los Siete Infantes de Lara*, by Zarate, in 1651, which, with ſome other pieces void of particular merit, brings us near to the demiſe of Charles the 2d.

Since the acceſſion of the Houſe of Bourbon, the tragic muſe has been chaſter, and the genius of the French drama has rendered them more correct. Don Auguſtin de Montiano, in his tragedies of *Virginia*, and *Ataulpho*, publiſhed in 1750 and 1753, may be ſtiled the Spaniſh Sophocles, and be ſaid to be equal to

Corneille and Racine in the juſtneſs of the drama, uniting the fire of the Gallic eagle with the melody of the ſwan. Mr. Hermilly has tranſlated his *Virginia* into French, as well as his firſt diſcourſe upon Spaniſh tragedy which precedes it, and to him I muſt refer you for the preſent.

Adieu!

LETTER XV.

Sketch of the life and character of the famous poet Lope de Vega.

MADRID, Auguſt 15th, 1778.

THOUGH I perfectly agree with you in opinion relating to our immortal Shakeſpeare, yet I cannot refrain from doing that juſtice to his contemporary Lope de Vega which his moſt extraordinary talents deſerve; I ſhall therefore attempt to give you the character of this great poet, which is no eaſy taſk when his amazing abilities are conſidered; however, I ſhall venture to proceed as this will be the laſt letter I ſhall write to you from hence.

Lope

Lope Felix de Vega Carpio, born the 25th November 1562, was the ſon of Felix Vega de Carpio, a gentleman of Madrid, who had the reputation of being a very good poet, a turn which he obſerved with rapture in his child from its infancy, and which the fond parent cheriſhed with the greateſt delight. At five years of age young Lope could read ſpaniſh and latin fluently, and even make verſes which he exchanged with his ſchool-fellows for pictures and other trifles. His father, charmed with this ſurprizing dawn of genius, ſpared no pains to cultivate a darling plant that ſeemed to encourage the moſt flattering expectations. At the age of twelve, Lope was maſter of the latin tongue and the art of rhetoric; could

dance

Plate 4.

dance and fence with eaſe and dexterity, and ſing with a tolerable taſte. ---Endowed with theſe accompliſhments, he became an orphan at his firſt entrance into the world with every preſſure of diſtreſs, and was taken into the ſervice of the biſhop of Avila, in whoſe praiſe he wrote ſeveral paſtorals, and made his firſt dramatic eſſay, with a comedy intitled *La Paſtoral de Jacinto.* He ſoon after quitted his patron, went to the univerſity of Alcala, where he ſtudied philoſophy, and took a degree, then returned to Madrid and became cretary to the Duke of Alva, who entruſted him with his moſt weighty concerns. Encouraged by his new Mecenas, he again tuned his lyre, and ſung his praiſe in a poem intitled

tled *Arcadia*. About this time he married Dona Iſabela de Urbina, a lady of faſhion, on account of whoſe gallantries he ſoon after fought a duel, and having grievouſly wounded his antagoniſt, fled to Valencia, where he lived ſome years; after which he returned again to Madrid, where loſing his wife, he felt himſelf animated with a military ardour, and repaired to Cadiz to embark on board the great armada, fitting out by Philip the 2d, againſt Queen Elizabeth. In this fleet he ſailed for Liſbon in company with his brother, a lieutenant in the ſpaniſh navy, who loſt his life in that expedition. Our poet had his ſhare of the misfortunes of that diſappointed fleet, and appeared at Madrid without a ſingle friend,

became

became ſecretary to the marquiſs of Malpica, and afterwards to the count of Lemos. Though his firſt marriage was ſo unſucceſsful, he was in hopes of being more fortunate in that ſtate with Dona Juana de Guardia, a lady of rank whom he ſoon after loſt. Inconſolable at theſe repeated afflictions, he entered into the eccleſiaſtic ſtate, was ordained a prieſt and appointed head chaplain to a congregation of prieſts at Madrid, though he ſtill courted the muſes, making this the chief relaxation that ſoftened his ſorrows. He was now in the zenith of his poetic glory, and his reputation became ſo univerſal that pope Urban the eighth ſent him the degree of doctor in divinity, and the croſs of the order of Malta,

Malta, added to a lucrative poſt in the apoſtolic exchequer, which Lope held to his death, which happened in his ſeventy-third year, to the great regret of the court, and every learned man in the kingdom. The duke of Seſa, who was his patron and executor, cauſed him to be interred at his own expence with ſuch pomp and magnificence as had never been ſeen before for a private perſon; the duke invited all the grandees of the kingdom, who attended in perſon, in token of their concern at the loſs of ſo diſtinguiſhed a character. The funeral obſequies laſted three days, all the clergy of the king's chapel aſſiſted, three biſhops officiated pontifically, and three of the moſt eloquent orators exerted themſelves in

praiſe

praiſe of the deceaſed, adding new laurels to the fame of Lope de Vega, with whom, when living, many princes gloried in being acquainted. Pope Urban wrote him a letter in anſwer to a dedication of his poem in favour of Mary queen of Scots, intitled *Corona tragica de Maria Stuardo*. Cardinal Barbarini held a very intimate correſpondence with him, as did many other cardinals and noblemen, who courted his friendſhip. When he walked in the ſtreets, he was gazed upon and followed as a prodigy, he was, moreover, loaded with preſents, and by the rapid ſale of his numerous works ſoon amaſſed a conſiderable fortune, and acquired a capital of 150.000 ducats, beſides his annual income of fifteen

hundred

hundred ducats, ariſing out of his benefices and employments; ſo great was the fertility of his genius, the amaſing readineſs of his wit and rapidity of thought, added to his animated expreſſion, that perhaps there never was a poet in the world, either antient or modern, that could be compared to him.—His lyric compoſitions and fugitive pieces, with his proſe eſſays, form a collection of fifty volumes, beſides his dramatic works, which make twenty-ſix volumes more; excluſive of four hundred ſcriptural dramatic pieces, called in Spain *Autos Sacramentales*, all which were ſucceſſively brought on the ſtage; and what is ſtill more extraordinary, ſpeaking of his printed works, in one of his paſtorals to

Claudio

Claudio he ſays they form the leaſt part of what ſtill remained in his cloſet. It appears from his own authority, that he uſed conſtantly to write five ſheets a day, which multiplied by the days of his life, would make 133,225 ſheets; then reckoning the number of verſes correſponding to each ſheet, it will appear that excluſive of proſe he wrote 21,316,000 verſes, an unheard of exertion and facility of verſification! Our author poſſeſſing an inexhauſtible fund, which like the fire of Veſuvius, continually afforded new matter, and blazed out inceſſantly. So extraordinary was the rapidity of his genius, he would often finiſh a play in twenty-four hours, and ſome comedies in leſs than five hours, with as much correctneſs and

elegance in his verſe, as the moſt laboured pieces of other writers of his time. Such was the contemporary of Sir Philip Sidney, Shakeſpeare, and Spencer; in his *Laurel de Apollo* he has celebrated all the good poets of his time, but none were more univerſally praiſed from all parts than himſelf; his ſurpriſing faculties were ſuch, that in his dramatic pieces he broke through all rules of art, yet ſuch was his ſucceſs, that he was conſtantly the favourite of the public, and drew perpetual burſts of applauſe.---It was not his fault if his ſucceſſors had not his talents to conceal their defects, and only imitated his imperfections, rendering the Spaniſh drama inſupportable when deprived

deprived of the beauties of Lope: this was foreſeen by Cervantes, who reproaches our poet with deſtroying the rules of the drama, as laid down by the ancients, in order to court popular applauſe; to obtain which he loſt ſight of every idea of nature, or good taſte, adding, that the probability of fable dwindled in his hands, and was wafted away by the enchanting magic of verſe; all unity of time and place was annihilated; his heroes came out of their cradles, and wandered from eaſt or weſt as lovers or combatants, put on the cowl of monks, died in cloyſters, and worked miracles on the ſtage. The ſcene is tranſported from Italy to Flanders, and as eaſily ſhifted from Valencia to Mexico. Footmen diſcourſe like

courtiers, princes like bullies, and ladies like chambermaids. The actors appear in legions, often ſeventy at a time, and cloſe with numerous proceſſions, which is ſtill kept up with us, as well as opening graves, and burying the dead, performing the moſt awful rites of mortality by way of amuſement, which for my part I muſt own makes my heart recoil at the diſmal ſight; nor can the moſt captivating language of Shakeſpeare overcome my feelings at this glaring indecorum.

So ſenſible was Lope of the wildneſs of his imagination, and how wantonly he ſported with the confidence of the public, that ſpeaking of himſelf,

himſelf, he acknowledges his fault in the following words:

Mas ninguno de todos llamar puedo
Mas barbaro que yo, pues contra el arte
Me atrevo a dar preceptos, y me dexo
Llevar de la vulgar corriente, a donde
Me llaman ignorante, Italia y Francia.

And again,

Y eſcrivo por el arte, que inventaron
Los que el vulgar aplauſo pretendieron
Porque como los paga el vulgo, es Juſto
Hablarle en necio, para darle guſto.

That is, "that he was ſenſible of the reproaches Italy and France would make him for breaking through all rules to pleaſe the ignorant public, but ſince it was they, that paid for it, they had a right to be pleaſed in their own way."

I have now given you both ſides of the queſtion, reſpecting this great man; were I to ſpeak to you of his perſonal virtues, they are yet ſuperior to his literary talents. His benevolence and charity towards the indigent and diſtreſſed was ſo great, that he always extended his hand to the needy, inſomuch that notwithſtanding his conſiderable fortune and income, not more than ſix thouſand ducats were found at his death.—O illuſtrious bard, if an Engliſhman is not capable of doing juſtice to thy poetical numbers, and the harmony of thy verſe, accept at leaſt of this tribute to the goodneſs of thy heart.

LETTER XVI.

City of Burgos. Tomb of the Cid, and of king John the Second.

BURGOS, 15th Auguſt, 1778.

THE next day after I had the pleaſure of addreſſing my laſt letter to you, I ſet out from the town of Madrid, and paſſing through Segovia and Valladolid, arrived at the antient city of Burgos, where I propoſe making a halt for a few days, to enjoy a little reſt after a fatiguing journey, and to look about me in this venerable city, dwindled from its former ſplendour, but ſtill the reſidence of many noble families, il-

luſtrious for their lineage and military atchievements.—In this city Edward, of England, eldeſt ſon of our king Henry the 3d, was knighted in 1254, by king Alfonſo the wiſe, and married the princeſs Eleanor of Caſtile, that amiable woman, who when her huſband was wounded with a poiſoned arrow in Paleſtine, ſucked the venom out of the wound, and reſtored him to health. Nor was the Engliſh nation wanting in acknowledgments to this affectionate princeſs, who dying of a fever on her journey to Scotland, was conveyed to Weſtminſter with great funeral pomp, and elegant ſtone croſſes were erected at each place where the corpſe reſted.—The cathedral of Burgos is a moſt magnificent ſtructure in the gothic

thic taſte, and has a great reſemblance to York minſter.—As this is the country of that famous Spaniſh hero Roderic Diaz de Bivar, commonly called the *Cid*, who lived in the days of Ferdinand the 1ſt, I did not forget to viſit his ſhrine at the church of *San Pedro de Cardena*, about ſix miles from hence, belonging to the benedictine monks; I went there with the ſame curioſity as I ſhould to view the tomb of Guy earl of Warwick, or any of our renowned Engliſh champions.--I accordingly mounted my courſer with becoming gravity, and repaired to his tomb, which is in a particular chapel of the church of San Pedro, with the arms of all his relations depicted on the walls, and a long ſcroll of his genealogy and exploits.

exploits. In the veſtry they have an original portrait of him, done immediately after his death.—His memory is held in ſuch veneration, that the good man, who ſhewed me every thing, twice called him a ſaint, but ſtopped ſhort and corrected himſelf. No warrior, however, has had ſo much ſaid of him; he has a ſeparate chronicle of his life and actions, in one volume in folio, printed in 1552 by command of the infant Don Ferdinand afterwards emperor, who gave this commiſſion to Velerado abbot of the convent of San Pedro. The writer ſays he extracted it from the original chronicle in the archives of that houſe; but in that he is miſtaken, for it was not an original but an antient copy according to the teſtimony

of

of Berganza, a monk of the ſame houſe, who about twenty years ago, publiſhed its antiquites, in two volumes in folio, and ſuppoſes that the original chronicle of the Cid was firſt written in arabic, by a converted moor, with his ſon, who were ſervants to the Cid, and was afterwards tranſlated into Spaniſh. The archbiſhop of Toledo, and Don Lucas de Tuy, are ſpoken of in this chronicle, tho' they flouriſhed in the middle of the 13th century, and the Cid died in 1099, therefore this chronicle muſt have been continued by another hand as father Sarmiento obſerves, but without impeaching the veracity of its contents. The general chronicle of Spain was compiled by order of Alfonſo the wiſe, yet whoever

ever reads what is ſaid of the Cid, and *vice verſa*, will doubt whether the general chronicle was copied from that of the Cid, or the latter from the former: but they ſtill have their ſhare of merit as far as they elucidate the manners and cuſtoms of the times, when diveſted of the fables and ſuperſtition with which they are clouded. Since the burning of Don Quixote's library, not only romances but many of the chronicles are become very ſcarce, and they are now reprinting a general collection of them at Madrid.— In vain have I ſearched for *Artus de Bretana*, who was turned into a crow, ſince which time no Engliſhman, according to Cervantes, will ever kill a crow. The elucida-

tion

tion of this point I muſt leave to yourſelf.

To return to the Cid, every thing belonging to this great warrior is ſacred; his ſwords are admired and ſhewn as great curioſities; one of them is in the king's armoury at Madrid, and is called *Colada*, in alluſion to its fine temper; on one ſide it has theſe four letters SI SI. and on the other NO NO. According to Garibay the hiſtorian, the Cid took this ſword from the Count of Barcelona, when in arms againſt the king of Aragon.--The other ſword was called the *Tizona*, "The flaming ſword," which he wreſted from Bucar lord of Tunis. This ſword belonged afterwards to the Infant Don Ramiro of Navarre,

Navarre, from whoſe houſe it was given to the family of Peralta. Sandoval, biſhop of Pamplona, in his chronicle deſcribes this ſword which he ſaw, and ſays, on one ſide it had theſe words *Yo ſoy la Tiſona que ſue hecha en la era de mil y quarenta.* On the other ſide *Ave Maria gratiæ plena. Dominus.*—The Cid was deſcended from Lain Calvo, one of the judges of Caſtile: he left two daughters, Dona Sola, married to the Infant Don Pedro eldeſt ſon of Peter king of Aragon, and Dona Elvina to Don Ramon Sancho, eldeſt ſon of Sancho Garcias king of Navarre. His panegyriſts have entered into endleſs details in his praiſe; even his horſe *Babieca* has not been omitted, and is ſaid to have lived forty-four years. Having taken

a ſolemn

a ſolemn farewell of this manſion, which was built on the remains of a palace belonging to this hero, I returned back to Burgos, ſtriking off a little to the right, to viſit *Miraflores* a convent of Carthuſians, given to that order by John the 2d king of Caſtile, who is interred in their church before the great altar, and has a beautiful marble monument adorned with infinite workmanſhip. This tomb the people call here a *pantheon*.—I ſaw in the choir, an original portrait of his daughter Iſabella queen of Caſtile, who appears to have been very handſome. There is a full length picture of her in the palace of Buen Retiro at Madrid.—You will ſay that I have quitted my ground ſince I have penetrated into old Caſtile,

tile, and have deſerted the poets for the chronicles, but allow me this digreſſion in favour of a hero who inſpired the great Corneille, and furniſhed a ſubject for the ſublime genius of that celebrated poet.---What would the bold Cid ſay, if he was to appear again on the horizon? If he, who to preſerve his precedency broke the chair of the French ambaſſador in the preſence of the pope, was to ſee his own countrymen making peace with the moors, and ſoliciting leave of the pope to eat fiſh in lent. Not like the devout heroes of thoſe and ſubſequent times, when the Engliſh and French, according to Rapin, fought a bloody battle juſt before lent, to intercept a convoy of fiſh, and numbers

bers loſt their lives to aſcertain who ſhould dine on a herring.

☞ In the reign of Henry VI. when John Duke of Bedford was regent of France in 1429, he ſent from Paris to the Engliſh army then beſieging Orleans, a convoy of ſalt fiſh, the lent ſeaſon being come, which with the artillery and ammunition, made near five hundred carts, under the command of ſir John Faſtolf, one of the braveſt generals in the Engliſh army. The convoy was attacked on the road to Orleans, by the French under the count of Clermont, at the head of three thouſand men, but they were repulſed with great ſlaughter by the Engliſh, loſing ſix ſcore lords and about ſix hundred men. This action was called "The battle of Herrings."

LETTER XVII.

Privileges of the different orders of nobility in Spain.

BURGOS, 4th SEPT. 1778.

YOU aſk me what ſort of figure the country gentlemen make in Spain, and who are the people ſtiled *Hidalgos*. To the firſt I ſhall anſwer that as the *Cortes*, or parliaments have been aboliſhed ever ſince the acceſſion of the houſe of Bourbon, all the conſequence of the country gentlemen has ceaſed. The *Hidalgos* claim a deſcent from thoſe valiant ſoldiers who retired into Caſtile, and the mountains of Aſturias, and other remote

mote parts of Spain, on the invaſion of the moors, where having fortified themſelves, they ſucceſſively deſcended into the plains, in proportion to the ſucceſs of their arms: ---- from the notoriety of their perſons, or the lands they became poſſeſſed of, they acquired the appellation of *Hidalgos notorios*, *Hidalgos de ſolar conocido*, or *de caſa ſolariega*; of theſe according to Hernando Mexia, there are three ſorts, the 1ſt being lords of places, villages, towns, or caſtles, from whence they took their ſirnames, as the Guzmans, Mendozas, Laras, Guivaras, and others; the 2nd, who recovered any fortreſs from the moors, as the *Ponces* of *Leon*, and others; and the third ſort, from the places where they reſided or held juriſdiction, as

Rodrigo de Narvaez was called of Antequera, from being *Alcayde* there. But this definition is not conſidered as exact or concluſive by Otalora, another civilian, who ſays that the true meaning of *Hidalgos de ſolar conocido* is explained by the laws of Caſtile, to be a well known manſion or poſſeſſion, the nature of which is particularly explained in the laws of the *partidas*, lib. 5. tit. 35. which deſcribe three ſorts of tenures called *Deviſa*, *Solariega* and *Behetria*. By the firſt, lands are deviſed by the anceſtor, *ſolar* is a tenure upon another perſon's manor, and obliges the owner to receive the lord of the fee when neceſſity obliges him to travel, and *Behetria* is in the nature of an *allodium*.

In

In proportion as theſe Aborigines gained ground on the Moors, and increaſed in their numbers, many private perſons diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their valour, and obtained teſtimonies of their ſervices, called *cartas de merced*, which ſerved them as a foundation of their birth and good deſcent, without which documents their poſterity could not make it appear; and if from a lapſe of time, or other unavoidable accidents, ſuch proof ſhould happen to be loſt, or deſtroyed, the law affords them a remedy under theſe circumſtances, by a declaration importing, that ſuch perſons as are ſuppoſed to have had ſuch certificates, may be relieved by making it appear, that their anceſtors, time immemorial, have always

been held and reputed as *Hidalgos*, and enjoyed the privileges of ſuch, from a ſtrong preſumption in their favour; the poſſeſſion of land having equal force to any other document, which is fully ſet forth in the *pragmatica* of Cordova. To theſe executory letters are granted, *cartas executorias*, expreſſive of their privileges, and for the better regulation of theſe matters, proper officers are appointed in the chancery courts, called *alcaldes de lor hidalgos*, who ought to be *hidalgos* themſelves, and hold juriſdiction in theſe caſes, and no others; but even here innovations have taken place, for as theſe grants flow from the ſovereign, who is the fountain of honour, ſome are declared *Hidalgos de ſangre*, by right of deſcent,

ſcent, and others *de privilegio*, or by office, in which, the will of the ſovereign has made amends for any deficiency of blood.

There is a ſet of people near Segovia at a place called Zamarramala, who are exempt from tribute on account of the care they take in ſending proper perſons every night to the caſtle of Segovia to keep centinel---- one cries out *Vela*, *vela*, *hao*, and the other blows a horn, from whence they have been titled *hidalgos by the horn*. In Catalonia thoſe gentlemen who are ſtiled *Hombres de Pareja*, are conſidered the ſame as *hidalgos* in Caſtile, and were ſo called from the word *parejar*, to equip, this name being given as a diſtinction by Bo-

relo the 4th, count of Barcelona, at the ſiege of that city in 965, who ſummoning all his vaſſals to come to his aſſiſtance againſt the moors, nine hundred horſemen well mounted and equipped joined him, and with their aid he took the city, and this appellation has been given in honourable remembrance of this loyal action.

You will of courſe be deſirous to know what are the priviſeges that theſe noble Hidalgos enjoy? The principal of them are as follows:

1. The firſt and greateſt privilege which they hold by law is to enjoy all poſts of dignity and honour in the church and ſtate, with liberty when churchmen of having a plurality of benefices.

benefices. They are qualified for receiving all orders of knighthood, and are to be preferred in all embaſſies, governments, and public commiſſions.

2. When they are examined as witneſſes in civil and criminal caſes, their depoſitions are to be taken in their own houſes, without being obliged to quit them to go to thoſe of others.

3. In all churches, proceſſions and other public acts or aſſemblies, they are to have the next place of honour and precedency after the officers of juſtice, conforming themſelves to particular cuſtoms.

4. They

4. They are not obliged to accept of any challenge for combat, ſuppoſing ſuch were allowed of, but from thoſe who are their equals.

5. Though it is forbid to guardians to purchaſe the eſtates of minors, this does not extend to *Hidalgos* in whom the law does not ſuppoſe any fraud, and they may purchaſe them publicly.

6. They are permitted to be ſeated in courts of juſtice in preſence of the judges, from the reſpect and honour due to them. They have alſo ſeats in the courts of chancery, in conſideration of their birth, which gives them a right to be near the perſons of princes.

7. Their

7. Their perſons are free from arreſt for debt, nor can any attachment be laid on their dwelling houſes, furniture, apparel, arms, horſes, or mules, in immediate uſe, nor can they make a ceſſion of their eſtates, nor be diſtreſſed in ſuits of law, further than their circumſtances will admit of, but are to be allowed a reaſonable and decent maintenance for their ſupport.

8. In caſes of impriſonment for criminal matters, they are to be treated differently from others. They are generally confined to their own houſes with a ſafe guard, or under arreſt upon their honour, or allowed the city or town they live in, and in particular caſes are ſent into caſtles.

9. When

9. When punishments are inflicted for criminal cases, they are to be less severe to them than to others, as they are not to suffer ignominious punishments, such as public shame, whipping, gallies, nor are they to be hanged, but beheaded, except in cases of treason or heresy.----In cases that do not imply a corporal punishment but a pecuniary one, they are treated with more rigour, and pay a larger fine than others.

10. They are not to be put to the rack or torture, except for such heinous crimes as are particularly specified by the laws.

11. When there are title deeds or other writings or papers in which two

or

or more perſons have an equal right or property, and require a particular charge, they are to be given up by preference to the cuſtody of an *Hidalgo*, if any of the parties are ſuch.

12. The daughter of an Hidalgo enjoys every privilege of her birth, though married to a commoner, and a woman who is not an *Hidalga*, enjoys all theſe privileges when ſhe is a widow, following the fortune of her huſband.----But if the widow is an *Hidalga*, and the late huſband was a commoner, ſhe falls into the ſtate of her huſband after his death, though ſhe had the privileges of her birth during his life.

13. They are free from all duties, called *Pechos*, *Pedidos*, *Monedas*, *Marte-*

niegas

niegas Contribuciones, as well royal as civil, and all other levies of whatever kind they may be, with a reſerve for ſuch as are for the public benefit, in which they are equally concerned, ſuch as the repairing the highways, bridges, fountains, walls, deſtruction of locuſts, and other vermin.

14. They are free from perſonal ſervice, and from going to the wars, except when the king attends in perſon; even then they are not to be forced, but invited, and acquainted that the royal ſtandard is diſplayed.

15. No perſons whatever can be quartered upon, or lodged in, their houſes, except when the king, queen, prince or infantes are on the road,

road, as in ſuch caſes even the houſes of the clergy are not exempt.

16. They cannot be compelled to accept of the office of receiver of the king's rents, or any other employment which is conſidered as mean and derogatory to their dignity and rank.

17. By a particular cuſtom confirmed by royal authority in that part of Caſtile beyond the Ebro, baſtards ſucceed to their parents, and enjoy their honours contrary to the royal and common law.

18. If a lady who marries a commoner ſhould be a queen, dutcheſs, marchioneſs, or counteſs, for they have

have no barons in Caſtile, not only does not loſe her rank, but conveys her titles to her huſband, who holds them in right of his wife.

Theſe are the general privileges which the *Hidalgos* enjoy; there are ſome others of leſs conſequence, as well as particular grants to certain perſons and families. An antient and ridiculous cuſtom is ſaid to be obſerved by noble ladies who are widows of plebeians, in order to recover their birthright, for which purpoſe they carry a packſaddle on their ſhoulders to their huſband's grave, then throwing it down and ſtriking it three times, ſay, "villain, take thy villainy, for I will abide by my nobility," and then they recover their privileges again.

As

As for the titles of marquiſs and count, which are called *Titles of Caſtile*, they ſeem to be merely honorary, and give much the ſame rank as our baronets do in England. The merchants of Cadiz ſeem fond of them, and when they grow rich, they are eaſily obtained.

The grandees of Spain form the true nobility of the country, and were originally divided into three claſſes, the firſt had the privilege of ſpeaking covered in the *cortes* in preſence of the king, the ſecond were covered after they had ſpoken, and the third were only *ad honores*, with the title of excellency, and the privilege of appearing with the others in public aſſemblies; ſince the extinction of the

cortes, their privileges have dwindled. When the death of the marquiſs de Valdermoſo was mentioned in the Madrid gazette, of the 6th of April, 1773, as a Grandee of the ſecond claſs, it was contradicted in the following one, adding that he only enjoyed the title *ad honores*.

The oldeſt duke in Spain ſeems to be the duke of Medina Sidonia, which title was firſt granted by king John the ſecond the 17th of February 1445, to John Alonſo de Guzman, third count of Niebla. Our oldeſt duke at preſent in England, is deſcended from Charles Howard, created duke of Norfolk by Richard the third, on June 28th, 1483.

If after this you aſk me what ſort of a life the *hidalgos* lead? I muſt inform you, it is much the ſame with that of Don Diego de Miranda, in Don Quixote, who gave the following account of himſelf. " My name is Don " Diego de Miranda; I am an *hidalgo*, " and a native of the village, where " with God's permiſſion, we ſhall dine " to day; my fortune is more than " moderate, and I live with my wife, " children and friends; my chief " amuſements are hunting and fiſh- " ing, yet I have neither hawks nor " greyhounds, but ſome decoy par- " tridges, and a bold ferret; I have " about ſix dozen of books, ſome in " Spaniſh, and others in latin, a few " of hiſtory, and others of devotion; " thoſe of knight errantry I have not

" yet ſuffered to come within my " doors. I delight (*) more in pro-

All theſe lines in the text after this mark to the end of the paragraph, are omitted in the new tranſlation of Don Quixote, by Charles Henry Wilmot, Eſq; London, 1774, as well as thoſe lines which immediately follow here.----

" Sancho, who was all attention to the account which the *Hidalgo* gave of his life and manners, which ſeemed to him to be commendable and holy, and that ſuch a good liver ought to work miracles, threw himſelf off from his aſs, and with great hurry ran towards Don Diego, and laid hold of his right ſtirrup, and with a fervent heart, and tears in his eyes, kiſſed his foot many times; which being obſerved by the *Hidalgo*, What are you about brother? he ſaid, what does this mean? permit me to proceed, ſaid Sancho, for your worſhip ſeems to me to be the firſt ſaint I have ever ſeen on horſeback. I am no ſaint, anſwered the gentleman, but a great ſinner; but you, good brother, are a worthy man, from the ſimplicity of your manners. Sancho returned to his ſaddle, having at laſt extorted a ſmile from the truly melancholy aſpect of his maſter, and cauſed further admiration to Don Diego.----Don Quixote aſked him how many children he had, &c.

" fane

" ſane books than in devout ones,
" provided that they are not immo-
" ral; that the language is elegant,
" and that the mind is captivated
" with the ingenuity of their inven-
" tion, though of theſe we have few
" in Spain. I ſometimes dine with
" my neighbours and friends, and of-
" ten invite them; my repaſts are
" plain and neat, but plenty dwells
" under my roof. I never find fault
" with my acquaintance, nor do I con-
" ſent to the murmurs of others in
" my preſence. I don't pry into the
" life and converſation of my neigh-
" bours, nor look ſharply into their
" actions. I hear maſs every day,
" divide my eſtate with the poor,
" without making boaſts of my cha-
" rity, not to let hypocriſy or vanity

" take poſſeſſion of my heart, ene-
" mies that gently ſteal upon the moſt
" guarded minds. I endeavour to
" reconcile thoſe who are at variance.
" I am devout to the Virgin Mary,
" and I place my truſt in the in-
" finite mercy of God."

With reſpect to their lineage, if you want further information, conſult Penafiel de Contreras, a famous Spaniſh antiquary, who, in compliment to Philip the 3d, drew up a genealogical tree of one hundred and eighteen deſcents, from Adam down to that ſovereign; and, to pleaſe the then prime miniſter, duke of Lerma, of the houſe of *Guzman*, he formed another pedigree of one hundred and twenty-one deſcents, alſo from Adam down

down to the duke, connecting him with the ſovereign, in the perſon of Tros, king of Troy, (great grand father of Priam and Æneas) by his two ſons Aſſaracus and Ilus; from one of which Philip deſcended, and the miniſter from the other! What a contagious diſtemper is flattery, and how rapidly it flies from pole to pole. In the north, John Miſſen paid a ſimilar compliment, deduced from Adam, to his ſovereign the king of Sweden; and William Slater did as much for James the 1ſt, king of Great-Britain.

Adieu!

LETTER XVIII.

Lordſhip of Biſcay.—Antient poetry in the Vaſcuenſe language.

BILBAO, October 10th, 1778.

AFTER travelling over a great many mountains, I at laſt arrived at this pleaſant town, which cloſes my expedition through the Spaniſh dominions. As for the antient language of this country called the *Vaſcuenſe*, we are the more perplexed and in the dark, as all the books extant in that language are modern; ſo that, it is a very difficult matter to give any preciſe ideas or fix any ſtandard of their tongue, and much

much leſs of their poetry, as the natives ſeem to have reſerved a particular corner of Parnaſſus to themſelves, in which they have neither rivals nor competitors.

If the poem in *Vaſcuenſe* mentioned by Argote de Molina in his diſcourſe on ſpaniſh poetry is as antient as the actions which it relates; we ſhould have a tolerable document to form a judgement of the poetry of theſe people, about the beginning of the fourteenth century, that is towards the year 1320. If we exclude this record, we have no other ſpecimen of their poetry, except ſome ſpiritual hymns of Juan de Aramburu, and thoſe of Bernardo de Gazteluzar printed at Pau in 1686, and another

nother anonymous poet, mentioned by Larramendi. The moſt famous of their poets is ſaid to be Juan de Echeverri, a Doctor in Divinity, who compoſed the life of Chriſt and of ſome ſaints, in this ancient verſe, which were printed at Bayonne in 1650.—As for my part I have in vain ſtudied the language in the grammar of Laramendi, and am willing to take the people on their words, who aſſure me it is very harmonious; nor can I give you any ſatisfactory account of the antiquity of the inhabitants who are ſuppoſed to have peopled Ireland. The iriſh antiquaries agree that the colonies of Mileſians came from Brigantia to Ireland, and O'Flaherty and Keating aſſert, that Florian de Ocampo an

old

old ſpaniſh writer, proves in his chronicle, that the Brigantines of Ireland owe their origin to Spain, and ſo paſſed into Wales; but for my part, as I am as little verſed in the iriſh tongue as I am in the Biſcayan, it is not in my power to give you any lights on this ſubject. ----- Who knows? if I had had the good fortune to read the poems of Oſſian in the original, perhaps it might have afforded ſome aſſiſtance, and I might have recovered from obſcurity ſome Biſcay warrior, like Fingal, who lorded it over theſe mountains, and perhaps did feats which the moſt harmonious verſes have done juſtice to, that now lie buried beyond the reach of our moſt profound antiquaries.

The

The inhabitants of the lordſhip of Biſcay, as a free people, enjoy a great many excluſive rights and privileges, beyond the Caſtilians, or any other ſubjects of Spain. Theſe rights are ſet forth in a folio entitled, *El Fuero de los Cavalleros de Viſcaya*, Medina 1575, which book I have ſought for in vain, as well as a geographic poem deſcribing the kingdom of Galicia, in alexandrine verſe, by Luis de Molina, printed at Mondonedo, in 1550.

An iriſhman, whoſe name is William Bowles, who having been employed for theſe twenty years as an engineer in the king of Spain's ſervice, and has travelled over moſt parts of Spain, has lately publiſhed ſome very curi-

ous

ous memoirs at Madrid, dedicated to the preſent king of Spain, intended as an introduction to the natural hiſtory and phyſical geography of that kingdom; amongſt other things he has given a pretty full account of the genius and manners of the Biſcayans, and has taken ſome pains to draw a compariſon between them and the antient iriſh; but this point ſtill admits of further illuſtration, from the very precarious foundation of all reaſoning, ariſing merely on a ſuppoſed ſimilitude of manners and cuſtoms: tho' I readily agree with him in the account he gives of their hoſpitable diſpoſition and chearful temper, added to the utmoſt induſtry in cultivating their rugged mountains, by which means they have rendered the

greateſt

greateſt part of their country both pleaſant and fruitful. They, moreover, apply themſelves cloſely to foreign commerce and navigation, having been always deemed induſtrious traders, and expert and ſkilful mariners, inſomuch that for the whale fiſhery ſo far back as 1575, the Engliſh merchants were obliged to ſend to Biſcay *for men ſkilful in the catching of the whale, and ordering of the oil; and one cooper, ſkilful to ſet up the ſtaved caſk.* It further appears, that we not only loſt all memory of that trade for many centuries, which we had known in the days of king Alfred, but that the Biſcayans carried it on long before we attempted it again, as well on account of the oil as for the whalebone: the firſt Engliſh ſhip that

that went on that trade into the bay of St. Lawrence, according to Hackluyt, in 1594, found part of the cargoe of two Biſcay ſhips that had been wrecked there, three years before. But, becauſe I am drawing nearer to England, you will ſay, I am again running into digreſſions, and it matters not, who had that fiſhery or any other maritime commerce at that time, provided we can hold it at preſent, and make good the old maxim, *Imperator Maris, Terræ Dominus.*

LETTER XIX.

Departure from Bilbao for England by ſea. Sentence of the inquiſition againſt Don Pablo de Olavide.

BILBAO, 10th Dec. 1778.

I HAVE been detained in this country longer than I expected, waiting in hopes of a friend who was deſirous of coming to England along with me; this delay, however, has enabled me to furniſh you with a very extraordinary piece of news, no leſs than the ſentence of the Inquiſition, againſt an unfortunate gentleman, who at one time was in high favour at court, and from whoſe abilities the greateſt expectations were formed.

You

You may perhaps have heard, ſome years ago, of the projects of this government to coloniſe the deſert mountains of Sierra Morena, in Andaluſia. The *Cedula*, or grant for this undertaking was iſſued by the king in 1767, and contains 79 articles. The intention of the court was to invite 6000 catholic germans and flemings, who were to be ſettled there with proper encouragement, in order to introduce agriculture and manufactures, as well as population in that deſolate diſtrict, for the carrying on of which the inſpection and management of the whole was given to Don Pablo de Olavide, *aſſiſtente*, or governor of Seville, from whoſe knowledge and patriotiſm it was expected a flouriſhing colony would ſoon ariſe; ac-

cordingly ſeveral towns were built, and the country ſoon began to wear a new aſpect, but unfortunately this gentleman was ſome time ago taken up at Madrid, hurried away from his houſe, and confined in the dark priſons of the inquiſition, and after a long and painful impriſonment, was brought in the moſt humiliating manner before his judges, and the following ſentence, which I incloſe you herewith, pronounced againſt him, on which I ſhall make no comments, as your own judgement will give you an idea of the *benevolence* and *liberality* of ſentiment that reigned in that aſſembly; ſhew you the weight of the charge; the manner by which it is proved, and of courſe how far he was deſerving of the dreadful

puniſhment that followed: by which the priſoner without having his loyalty or fidelity to his ſovereign called in queſtion, becomes the moſt unhappy ſubject poſſible and in an infinitely worſe ſtate than the moſt wretched perſon in the kingdom.

I now lay down my ſpaniſh lance, as well as the golden helmet of Mambrino, and am haſtening home as faſt as poſſible, reſerving only my Toledo blade, made by that famous artiſt Andrew Ferrara.—The din of war ſounds conſtantly in my ears; it is too late at preſent to look back! If I fall, may it be glorioufly in defence of my country, my beloved country, whoſe rights I fervently wiſh may ever remain inviolate! let

who will be the invader.—Methinks I ſee you caſt a diſdainful look towards the ſpaniſh muſe; let me then have recourſe to your admired Petrarch, and in bidding farewell to the continent, as I ſhall embark at this port, I cloſe our correſpondence with the following lines of that favourite poet:

Del empia Babilonia ond e fugitta
Ogni vergogna, ond ogni bene e fuori,
Albergo di dolor, madre d'errori
Son fugit io per allungar la vita.

Narrative of an Auto de Fe, *held the 27th of November, 1778, in the cauſe of Paul de Olavide, before Don Joſeph Eſcalzo, and Don Bernardo Loigorri, inquiſitors of the court, with the aſſiſtance of ſeveral perſons of rank called to attend thereat, who were not even charged with ſilence, out of charity, as is cuſtomary on ſimilar occaſions.*

PRESENT,

Duque de Granada and his chaplain Moſa Xaraba
Cerda
Don Patricio Buſtos
Don Roſendo Paraſpuelo
Marquiſs de Caſatremanes
Duke of Hijar
Marquiſs of Belamazan
Count of Mora
Duke of Abrantes
Don Joſeph Eulate
Don Ant. Monſagrati
Don Manuel Treviſano
Don Julian de San Chriſtobal
El Maeſtro Virgala Dominico
El Maeſtro Ibaretta Benedictino

The abbot of St. Martin
Don Juan de la Roſa
The Vicar of Toledo
Santa Maria
Father Cardenas a Capuchin
El Maeſtro Magin
Mercenarian
Another Maeſtro of the ſame order
The Marquis de la Hinojoſa
Don Juan Valcarcel Canario
Don Antonio Angoſto
Colonel
With other perſons of diſtinction to the number of forty.

"The accuſed made his appearance in a yellow robe with a green taper in his hand, and was ordered to ſit on a bench oppoſite to the inquiſitors, who had a table before them, covered with the papers relating to the proceſs. One of the ſecretaries began to read a ſummary of the cauſe which was followed by other papers, and continued till noon; at which time they had gone through the whole,

whole, having begun at eight in the morning.

"The depoſitions of the priſoner were read, taken after his confinement in the priſons of the holy office, in which he divided his life into three epochas. The firſt comprehends the ſpace of thirty years, in Lima, and in Spain; with reſpect to his notions, in which though weak and a ſinner, he confeſſes his true and ſolid ſentiments concerning religion, articles of faith, dogmas, rites, and cuſtoms of the church; as well as want of that improvement he afterwards acquired in the ſecond period. This includes the ſpace from his tour into foreign parts, where loſing his temporal felicity, and jealous of that of others in

Spain, he formed to himſelf his new maxims; acquired much knowledge in every branch of ſcience, became acquainted with Voltaire and Rouſſeau, and other free-thinkers, whom he argued with, to ſee if they could convince him: thus ſtifling the qualms of his own conſcience, he gave himſelf up to his opinions and pleaſures. The third period includes, from the year 1767, down to the preſent time, when full of pre-occupations, and falſe ideas of the abuſes of the regular and ſecular clergy; his attention to population; his falſe notions of the prerogative, cauſing impediments to the happineſs of ſtates; the fetters of religion; and opinions of the Romans; he gave up his whole thoughts to the ſettling new

colonies

colonies in the Sierra Morena; and taken up with his own ideas, he ſpoke without reflection, with temerity, with imprudence, urged on by his opponents, concerning the fallibility of the pope, the tribunal of the inquiſition, and of all thoſe things which in his opinion might retard or impede his projects: proteſting that all, that had been ſaid and reported, had been ſtrained into a different ſenſe by his hearers, and others, who might have been ſcandalized thereat.

"Theſe declarations were followed by the depoſitions of ſeventy-eight witneſſes, who certify ſeparately and jointly all the novelties, we find diſſeminated amongſt the free-thinkers of

of the times; diſtinguiſhing particular caſes and facts, blaſphemies *nominatim* maintained, and practical caſes on all theſe points. Many are confeſſed, and others he denies, ſaying he does not remember them, others that they were merely delivered in the names of their authors, inſiſting that he never believed them in his heart. That many were ſaid in a jocoſe manner, to try the temper of his hearers, and that he ſuffered himſelf to be carried away with the vainglory of ſhining in converſation.—To the objections of having ſaid that St. Auſtin was a poor ſimple man, and that Peter Lombard, St. Thomas, and St. Bonaventure had retarded the progreſs of ſcience by their ſcholaſtic forms and abſtruſe manner, he palliated

palliated, by ſaying, that in his opinion, if they had lived in theſe times, in which the mind has been ſo much improved by philoſophy, they would have reaped greater profit, and when charged with his contempt of the moſt ſacred myſteries, he retorts it upon the abuſes of the clergy and hypocrites, on which head he ſpoke irreverently of confeſſion and paſchal communion. In this manner he exculpates himſelf from a number of accuſations, brought againſt him in the *Plenarium*, wherein 90 witneſſes ſpeak more fully and openly.

" He is moreover convicted by papers of his hand writing, as well as his own letters, which he has ſolemnly avowed; the ſpies and ſtratagems

have

have been diſcovered by which, he endeavoured to perſuade the witneſſes, to recede from their firſt depoſitions; alſo his intercepting and opening the letters of the inquiſition and falſe anſwers given to hide his ſecrets and intentions; the confidents employed in theſe acts, and the inſtructions given by means of theſe theſts, and other arts, by which he diſcovered all the proceedings of the inquiſition, and their deſigns; in a word, every method which human invention could deviſe to overſet the proceedings.

" That *the Roman Emperors were better than many holy kings*, he explains merely with reſpect to natural virtues. That he ridiculed the religious

ous men of the order of St. Peter of Alcantara when in Rome, who preſenting themſelves to him on viewing the *Capitol*, he confeſſes, acknowledging that their poverty and nakedneſs cooled his enthuſiaſm in their favour. Of this kind there are an infinity of inſtances throwing a ridicule on the moſt ſacred ſubjects. He calls the inſtitution of the Carthuſians *barbarous*, and if he preferred the ſtate of matrimony to celibacy and ſpoke with contempt of the religious vows of an aſcetic life, and of continency, it was only to encourage propagation in a holy manner, being ſo much wanted in Spain: that all he had ſaid, and done, in the new ſettlements, was to correct the abuſe of alms, to encourage labour, and to

baniſh

baniſh idleneſs, to which the ſettlers were prone, under pretence of going to maſs, and other devotions in the churches. For his indecent pictures, and his portrait, holding a picture of Venus and Cupid, he lays the blame on the painters of Geneva, who did them without any orders from him. The enthuſiaſm of Cruſades and the increpations of St. Bernard, who encouraged them ſo ſtrongly; attributing the ſales made by the faithful of their eſtates, with hopes of acquiring better in the holy land, *to the intrigues of the clergy, to get poſſeſſion of them*, he repreſents, as merely diſcourſe held in the name of thoſe, who aſſerted ſuch blaſphemies in their writings: and the ſame excuſe is given by him, when he

is

is convicted of having characteriſed the order of St. Francis with ignorance, for ſecuring a livelihood at the expence of the public by repreſenting poverty as honourable. In a word, all that St. Evremont declaimed againſt the inſtitutes of Regulars; with what was publiſhed before the councils of Conſtance and of Trent, and the ſubtilities of the preſent times, under a pretext of the public good, and the advantage of the ſubject; all this, is compriſed under different heads in this ſuit. All that we hear from the literati of the preſent age, the writings of free thinkers, and what theſe oracles announce, as proceeding from prepoſſeſſions, touching the juriſdiction in no wiſe coercive of the church; all

all theſe are proved in the proceſs; many are confeſſed and many ill excuſed, which are infinite in number; and time would be wanting, were I to name many other circumſtances of this kind. They are more than ſufficient to pronounce him a *formal heretic*, to confiſcate all his eſtates, declare him incapable of all honours and dignities; to be baniſhed from the court, royal ſeats, new colonies, Lima, and Seville 20 leagues round. To be ſhut up eight years in a convent, where he is to read *The ſymbol of faith* of Father Luis de Granada, and *The incredulous without excuſe*, of Father Seneri, with other leſs penalties, and to confeſs his ſins once a month. The inquiſitor general pardons him from

from the *ſambenito* (*a*), and he appeared in public without his croſs of knighthood of the order of St. James.

(*a*) The *ſambenito*, ſays a Spaniſh writer, is a garment covering the breaſt and ſhoulders and wore by a reconciled penitent at his trial before the inquiſitors. The name is an abbreviation of the words *ſaco benedicto* "bleſſed garment." In the primitive church penitents were clothed in robes bleſſed by the biſhop or prieſt, and they ſtood with them at the door of the church till they had performed their penances, were abſolved from their ſins and admitted again into the boſom of the church; which cuſtom has been imitated by the inquiſition, inſomuch that, though in the eyes of the world it is ignominious and affronting; if thoſe that wear it, continues the ſame profound writer! accept with patience, what may be ſaid of them by the vulgar, it may be of great merit in the ſight of God.----- *Teſoro de la Lengua Caſtellana*, por "*Don Sabaſtian de Cobarruvias Orozco capellan de Su Mageſtad conſultor del Santo Oficio de la inquiſicion. Madrid*, 1611

"On hearing the ſentence and finding himſelf declared *a formal heretic*, he ſaid, *not ſo*, and fell from the bench like one in a fit: he made a ſolemn abjuration, after a proteſtation of faith, was abſolved from cenſures, with all the formalities of the ſacred canons, and became the greateſt object of compaſſion. He declared in writing, that the utmoſt rigour was nothing when compared to his wickedneſs, and all appearances ſeem to beſpeak repentance, but *de occultis non judicat eccleſia!*"

THE END.